

After that Saint Paule hath at the beginning of this epistle somewhat spoken of his great troubles and afflictions whiche he had suffered for Christes gospelles sake, declaryng that in al them god was his coumfort, firste he sheweth the causes why he came not agayne to the Corinthians, as he had in his other epistle promysed. And straight after that, bringeth agayne in fauour with y^e Corinthians the haynouse fornicatour, whom he by his former epistle had commaunded to bee geuen ouer to Satan, desyring them louyngly to receiue hym vpon hys amendement, whome they had banished for his offence. And this in maner is all that he doth in the firste and seconde chapter. Then reherseth he his greate laboure in prealchyng the Gospell, by the waye checkyng and reprouyng other false Apostles whiche sekyng for theyr owne aduantage and glorie in all tymes and places, allured men to Moses lawe, whiche they in such sort laboured to myngle with the law of Christe, as though without it, there were no hope of saluacion. And therefore preferreth he the lyght of the gospell before the shadowes of Moses lawe, eftsones exhortyng them, not to the ceremonies of the lawe, but to be vplyght of conscience, and to leade a christian lyfe, shewyng in the meane season, how without corrupcion he had preached Christes gospell, and what miseries he had suffered for the gospels sake in hope of heauenly reward. And beside this declareth, in what poyntes christianitie specially standeth. Of all whiche mat|ters Paule entreateth in the latter ende of the seconde chapter, and in the thirde, the fourth, fyfte, and in the begynnyng of the syxte. For in the reste of this chap|ter, and in the begynnyng of the nexte, he exhorteth them to knowe theyr owne dignitie, and the holines of theyr profession, willyng them to absteyne wyth all diligence from the corrupcion and viciouse life of painyms, as men with whom they had nothyng to dooe. Fourthly he mollifieth the sharpenes vsed in his for|mer epistle, praysyng theyr obedience, for that they in all poyntes obeyed his elpistle, notwithstanding the sharpe earnestnes thereof: reioysing, that the short heauines, wherein he had caste them by his letters, had made both, that is to we[•]e, the Corinthians and hym mearye, euen as men are wont to be when they by bitter medicines are restored to health. Fyftlye he prouoketh euerye one of them, as well by the exaumples of the Macedonians, as by dyuers argumentes and recordes of scriptures, to bestow according to theyr abilities, and as their good wyll was, some thyng towarde the reliefe of the sayntes, that were at Hierusalem, remembryng that he by Peter was commaunded so to doe, for y^e same purpose sending thither Tytus with a coumpanion, whiche was (as the more parte doth suppose) Luke, whome he commendeth vnto them: and thys dothe Paule in the .viii. and in the .ix. chapter. Sixtely the false apostles, whom in his other epistle he but priuely checked and taunted, he in this playnly & opely

reproueth, which with proud & highe lokes toke vpon thē the honour and diglntie of apostles, bringing Paule into dis•eine, sai yng y• he was but a •ase perlsone, as whiche vsed shomakers crafte, and that he was rude, and vnlearned: & besyde this oft tymes wronged, and beaten. Againste them Paule defendeth his authoritie, declaryng that at al t tymes he had an apostles power and autority, which yet he woulde not vse to other mens payne, as some did, but only to the cōmoditie of his hearers, & the glory of Christ. Then because he was compelled somewhat to boast of himself, he desireth them first to beare with his folishnes, & then fyrst he maketh himselfe equal with the chief apostles, and by an by setieth hymself before them al, & that for many causes, eyther because he more enlarged the doctrine of y• gospel, or els because he only taught the same freely, as which was nether by him self, nor by any of his chargeable to the Achaians: or finally because he had for the gospels sake suffered more persecucion than anye of them al, coumpting such miseries and troubles as matter to glorie vpon, for y• which other thought him more to be despised. After which of an humble & low mind he confesseth his rudenes and barbarousnes in language, but yet knowlage and learnyng taketh he vpon him, leste they myghte in hym for this finde any lacke. Finally because the false apostles among the simple people made greate crakes of fayned visions of angels, Paule shewethe them a verye notable and a trewe vision, as who was taken vp into the thyrd heauē, and was there taught such thynges, as passed all mennes capacities: and of these thynges intreateth he, in the, x, xi, & xii, chapter. Seuenthy, lest through false apostles they myght fall agayne into theyr old vice, he saieth that he purposed to se them agayn: eftsones with threatenings warnyng them, not to be founde suche in theyr ordre of lyfe, as therby he myghte be compelled, by vsyng extremitie, to be vnlike hymselfe: or els, leste, as he was compelled vehemently by letters to wryte vnto them, so myght he beyng present, be compelled to vse his autoritie, otherwyse than he had done in tymes past, when he myght haue lawfullye done so. And this doth Paule in the latter ende of the .xii. chapter, and in the xiii. The greeke titles declare, y• this epistle was sent from Philippos by Titus and Lucas. But the bryefe argumentes whiche are found in latine boke, without any autours name, record and testifie that it was by the same messanlgers sent from Troas, for of this place Paule maketh mencion in the selconde chapter of this present epistle.

The ende of the Argument.

The pharaphrase of Erasmus vpon the second Epistle of Saint Paule to the Co|rinthyans.

¶ The fyrste Chapter.

The texte▪

Paule an Apostle of Iesu Christe by the wyll of god and brother Tymothye.
Vnto the congregacion of god, whiche is at Corinthewyth all the Sayntes
whiche are in al Achaia: Grace be wyth you, and peace from god our father
and from the Lorde Iesus Christe▪

PAule an ambassadoure in Iesus Christes behalfe, au|thorized by god
the father: and Timothy, in religion my brother, and felowe in office: vnto
the christian compa|nye, not of them onelye, whiche are at Corinthe, but
al|so to all the sayntes, that thorowe the whole countreye of Achaia
(whereof Corinthe is the heade cite) dooe faythfull searuyce to Christe:
Grace wyshe wee vn|to you, peace, and concorde, by the free gyfte of our
Lorde Iesus Christe, and God his father, whiche is also father to vs all.

The texte.

Blessed be God (the father of our Lorde Iesus Christe) whiche is the father
of mercy and the God of all coumforte, whiche coumforteth vs in all oure
tribulacion, insomuch y• we are hable to comfort thē which are in any
maner of trouble, w^t thesame comfort wher|with we our selues are cōforted
of God. For as the afflictions of Christe are plenteous in •s, euen so is oure
consolacion plenteous by Christe.

With all good and luckye woordes, blessed, magnified, and praysed bee
God, the father of oure Lorde Iesus Christe, the very fountayne and
autoure of all goodnes, no fearefull God to the righteous and godly, but
one of whom all our comfort commeth, whiche ceaseth not to aide and
coumforte vs his mes|sangers in all suche troubles, as maie any wayes
befall vs, whiche he doothe not onely for our sakes, leste we myght
happely through vehement persecucion fall from hym, but for your sakes
also whiche as through oure troubles, for y• loue ye beare towarde vs,
are in greate heauinesse, so are ye for oure reliefe, and •easte, gladde and
ioyfull: and by our exauple in hope of goddes healpe man|fully continue
in suffreyng persecucion and troubles, standyng in a sure truste &
confidence, that as god, which as ye se, aided and strengthned vs beyng
oppres|sed with miseries, and wellnygh deade, so wyll hein your troubles
healpe and succour you, whose goodnes is suche, as wyll accordyng to
oure temptacions measure his mercifull comfort. Nor loth we suche
afflictions, as we suffre and endure, for Christes sake: and as Christe gaue
exauple, knowyng this, that y• more greuouse tormentes he suffered, the
more coumforte and honoure is he in. And the greater tormentynges we
lykewyse for his glory suffered and a bode, by his meane so muche more
plentiouslye hath god relieued vs, being deliuered out of trouble, to the

intent ye should lykewyse stande in hope and loke for that whiche ye see alreadye doone in vs.

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The texte.

Whether wee bee troubled for your consolacion and health, (or whether wee bee comforted, •• is for your comforte and saluacion) whiche saluacion sheweth her power in that ye fu••re the|same same afflictions, whiche we also suffre: or whether wee bee comforted for your consolacion and saluacion, our hope also is stedfast for you: in asmuch as we know how that as ye are partakers of the afflictions, so••, all ye be partakers also of the consolacion.

Therefore whether wee bee troubled with aduersities, that doeth god to encourage you, and for vs so to be, is to your wealthe an expediente meane, that ye beeyng throughe our exaumple strengthned, may stoutly abyde euen the moste extreme violence, that maye bee laied vpon you, whose sufferance albeit ve paynfull, yet is it verye holsome: or els yf we be refreashed, so that the storme of persecucion be paste and alayed, euen this doth god also, intendyng by relieuyng vs to refreashe youre courages, leste ye myghte wyth sorowe and payne faynt and despayre, but rather vpon a remembraunce, how there is a chaunge from soro we to pleasure, ye myght likewyse bee hable to suffre suche troubles as wee dooe. And trewlye in greate hope are wee that ye wyll surelye dooe so, that ye maye bee also of our ioyes partakers hereafter, as ye are alreadye par|takers of our afflictions: and as ye were heretofore sorye for our afflictions, so shoulde ye now reioyce of our deliuerance, synce it is meete and conueniente that frendes and louers shoulde bee in lyke condicion of paynes and pleasures.

The texte.

Brethren I woulde not haue you ignoraunte of our trouble, whiche happened vnto vs in Asia. For wee were greued oute of measure passing strengthe, so greatlye that we despayred euen of life. Also we receaued an answeere of death in our selues, that we should not put our truste in our selues: but in god, whiche raysed the dead to lyfe agayne, and which deliuered vs from •o great a death, and doth deliuer. On whome wee truste that yet hereafter he wil deliuer by the helpe of your prayer for vs, that by the meanes of manye occasions, thanks maye bee geuen of manye on our behalfe, for the grace geuen vnto vs.

And perfeitely knowe I, ye woulde much more reioyce, yf ye throwghlye wiste, howe vehement a blaste of persecucion happened vnto vs in Asia. For there suffered wee afflictions aboue al measure, as which were more vehement than our strength was hable to beare, by reason whereof we were broughte to that poynt, that we despayred of our life, as vtterly vnable to suffre so manye and such extreme troubles. Yea and of such violence was that persecucion, that not onely other despayred, howe we shoulde bee hable to indure them, but •um|myne owne mynde vpon distruste conceaued of my strength, had euer death prelsente, so that my hearte gaue me to looke for nothyng, but for my last daye. To which extremityt it pleased god we shoulde be brought, because we shoulde in our own strength put none affiaunce, but trust to his healpe, which is cōmonly most wont, thē to be at hand & to succour, whē al worldly aides most disapoint vs and fayle, whiche when his pleasure is, not onely deliuereth y• oppressed frō the ieopardies of death, but restoreth also suche as are dead to life agayne. As for any thyng then that in me was, euen than dead was I, and destroyed, from whiche death yet god than deliuered, and dothe euen nowe styll deliuer me, of whome also I stande in suche a confidence, that he wyll hereafter deliuer vs: specially yf ye healpe me with your prayer to procure and obteyne the fauoure of god, to the intente, that as we were sauēd by the wishes of many, and for the weale of many, there may diuersly by many men, for our deliuerance, thanks be geuen to god, that it maye appeare, that this benefite of god in my deliue|rance is not onely bestowed vpon me, but vpon al suche as haue good therby.

The texte.

For oure reioycyng is this, euen the testimonie of oure conscience, that in singlenes (of heart) and godlye purenesse, and not in fleshly wisdomē, but by the grace of God, we haue had ou•conuersacion in the worlde, and moste of all to youwardes. We write none other thynges vnto you, then that ye reade, and also knowe. Ye and I truste ye shall finde vs vnto the ende, eluen as ye haue founde vs partelye: for we are youre reioy•ing, euen as ye are ours in the daye of the Lorde Iesus.

Were not this, as touchyng my selfe, I haue in my owne breste, wherewyth to comforte me sufficientlye in the middes of my troubles: yea and to make me reioyce and to glorye: that is to were, my conscience, whiche is witnesse, and priuy to this poynte, that we neuer laboured in the ministerie of Christes gos|pell, sekyng for any gaynes by auauncing our selves in worldlye wisdomē, as among you some dooe, but taught it with all simplicitie and godly puritie bothe in all Greece, and speciallye among

you, for whose sake albeeit wee haue suffered suche greate thynges, yet neuer loked wee for, or tooke any rewarde at your handes, leste some myght take occasion to thynke, that wee for oure ad|uauntage so muche sought vpon you. And this muche haue I sayed, not arro|gantly, but as y^r trueth is. Nor boast we this otherwise of our self, than ye haue hadde experience of, for neuer founde ye vs other, than suche as wee saye we are by these letters, which ye reade, nor make wee ourselves other in woordes by writyng, than wee among you shewed oureselves in dooyng. Yea and I truste more ouer, that of what sorte ye haue hytherto partly founde vs: suche shall ye alwayes finde vs hereafter: that eche of vs maye glorie of other, if ye lyke thank|full and apte children on your sydes in godly lyfe and deedes, bee lyke vnto your father & teacher, as I haue in al pointes bene vnto you goddes true messenger▪ Lette them in the meane season boste themselves neuer so muche among menne, that disdeine at me, as an outcaste, and one in afflictions, yet certaynelye, when the Lorde shall come, beefore whome paynted coulours shall nothyng serue, then wyl I reioyce of you, whom I haue wonne vnto Christ, then shall ye also glorie of me, whome I nothyng taughte but Christes trewe doctrine.

The texte.

And in this confidence was I minded firste to haue come vnto you, that I might haue had one pleasure more with you, and to passe by you into Macedonia, and to haue come againe out of Macedonia vnto you, and to bee led foorth of you towarde Iewrye. When I thus wise was minded: did I vse lightenes? Or thynke I carnally those thynges which I thynke? that with me shoulde bee yea, yea, and naye, naye. God is faithfull. For our preachyng to you was not yea and naye. For Goddes sonne Iesus Christe whiche was preached among you by ^os (eluen by me and Siluanus and Tunotheus) was not yea and nay: but by hym it was yea. For all the promises of God, by him are yea: and are in hym Amen: vnto the lawde of God thorow vs. For it is God, whiche stablisheth vs with you in Christe, and standeth by vs, and hath anointed vs, whiche hath also sealed vs, and hath geuen the earnest of the spirite in our hertes. I call God for a record vnto my soule, that for to fauour you with al I came not any more vnto Corin|thum. Not that we be lordes ouer your fayth, but are helpers of your ioye For by faith ye stād.

And vpon confidence of this my vpright conscience, and hope conceaued of your encrease and furtheraunce, occasion had I, and minded before this time to visite you, therby purposyng to do you double pleasure, both w^t mine epistle fyrste, and also by the waye after wyth my presence. For my purpose was to see you as I went into Macedonia, and agayne in my returnyng from Macedo|nia, to come vnto you, as I promised in my other epistle, and thence to be ledde and brought furthe by you into Iewrye.

But in the meane season some wyll thynke, synce I this wyse mynded to dooe, whether it came of lightnesse, that I chaunged myne intende: or whether I per|fourme not that of any worldly policie, whiche I once purposed to doe, in this alteryng my minde, as occasion serueth. No nor so, but for good consideracions and aduisedly folowed I not mine own destre, because I wel vnderstode that it was for your weale more expedient to dooe otherwise, that by defferryng my retourne, some of your congregacion myght bee amended, whome I would not see in theyr vncleanesse: in this poynte alwayes constaunte and lyke my self, that I at all tymes seeke youre weale, so that in this behalfe I neuer wauer, but allwayes dooe that, whiche shall bee for your profite, and alwayes shonne that, ^{*} whiche I thynke vnprofitable for you, not because I thynke it lyeth in vs to perfourme asmuch as we purposed, but because we know, that god deceaueth not, by whose healpe our woorde, wherewith wee preached vnto you his gos|pell, wauered not, but was at all times like it selfe. For wee preached not vnto you worldye and carnall matters, but taught you a weightye, effectuall, and an vnchaungeable doctryne: constauntly, and after one sorte, bothe I, Silua|nus, and Timothie, that is to we•e, that Iesus Christe is the sonne of God, whose name was not among you vneffectuall, but mightye and full of power, not by oure strengthe, but by his free gyfte. Vntil this time haue ye receaued the giftes of the holye ghoste, possessing them, as an earnest peny, and as sure shal ye bee of suche thynges, as are in time to come promissed, For al thynges, that are promissed, are through hym sure, and out of all doubte in hym, to whome this glorie is dewe. Neyther are these oure promisses, whiche wee layed before you, and shewed you of, but god is the chief geuer of thē, we are only ministers and messangers. So that to his glorie maketh it, yf that whiche wee preache in his name bee founde trewe and effectuall. Besyde this, whereas wee haue constauntelye preached Christe, and ye haue constauntelye continewed in Christes religion once receaued, that is goddes gyfte also, whiche because wee should in his promisses haue more cōfidence, hath also anointed vs with his se|create gyftes, and printed a certaine marke in oure heartes, yea and geuen into oure soules his spirite, as an earnest and pledge of the blessed state promissed vnto vs hereafter. Lette no manne therefore thinke it lightnesse, because I vn|till this time differred my commyng vnto you, god take I to recorde, that whereas I hitherto came not to Corinth, that was not doone for any displea|sure borne towarde you, but rather of a louynge mynde, leftte yf I hadde comen rather, I shoulde haue beene compelled to vse extremitie towarde suche, as were not yet amended, whome I trusted yet, woulde in the meane season cumme to amendemente. Better thoughte I it sommewhat the later to cumme vnto you, so that my cummyng mighte bee bothe to you and me more pleasaunte, than to bee among you after an earnest behaioure and sad. Nor lette any thynke these my woordes to bee spoken proudelye and after a threatening sorte, but for youre correccion. Wee beare no lordelye rule vpon a|nye ^{*} other than suche, as haue sinned. Touchyng therefore your fayth, wherein ye continue, wee

beare no rule vpon you but in the ordre of lyfe some thyng is there
whiche I woulde were amended. And so farre are wee from thre|tenynge
suche euil liuers, to shewe thereby what authoritie we haue vpon you,

that by these wayes wee prouide to kepe you in gladdenesse, whiche I
woulde not, should through the corrupt maners of some, and mine
earnestnesse, which I could not choose but vse, bee in any wyse appayred
with sorowefulnesse.

The seconde Chapter

The texte.

But I determind this in my self, that I woulde not come again to you in
heauines. For if I make you sory, who is it that shoulde make me glad, but
the same whiche is made sory by me? And I wrote this same vnto you, leste
if I came vnto you, I shoulde take heauines (vpon heauines) of them of
whome I ought to reioyce. This confidence haue I towarde you all, that my
ioye, is the ioye of you all. For out of greate affliction and anguish of hert, I
wrote vnto you with many teares: not that ye shoulde be made sorie: but
that ye mighte perceaue the loue, whiche I haue, moste specially vnto you.

B Vt rather, forasmuche as I with my former letters, of necessitie
made you heauye and pensife, by condemning the incestuouse
fornicatoure, I thoughte it not meete with my comming thither with anye
newe heauinesse to vexe and trouble eyther you or my self. Fayne would
I alwayes vnto you bee pleasaunte, and neuer painful •nlesse ye prouoke
me. But yf I at anye tyme bee tho|roughe your outragiousnesse
compelled, whiles I cor|recte a fewe, to make you all sorye, when I my self
am by these meanes made sorye, who canne make me gladde agayne, but
the same manne, whiche is by me made heauye and sadde? And surely
ioyfull shall I bee yf I through suche sharpe correccion finde him healed,
and fynde you likewise now reioysing of his recouerye, as ye to fore
were of his sorowe partakers.

And euen for this cause wrote I this epistle vnto you beefore my
cummyng, leste, yf when I come vnto you, I might by suche take sorow, by
whome mete were it, and seaming, that I toke pleasure and comfort,
specially synce I surely perswade my selfe, that ye are after suche sorte
minded towardes me, that whether I mourne for the correccion and
punishement of some, that my he|uinesse will bee comen to you all:
or if I bee gladde for some of youre amen|dementes, ye will also all bee

gladde with me. Nothyng is there more greuous vnto me, than if I among you see suche thynges, as beseame not your religion, and agayne no man is more gladde, than yf I see nothyng in you woorthie rel|profe. I therefore beeyng exceadynglye astonied with suche an outragiousse of|fence, being such as was wel knowē amōg you, wrote vnto you y^esame letters, not without greate heauinesse of hearte, and great affliccion nor without malny teares, not with them to make you sory, but that ye might perceauē my loue and good wil towarde you, which the more readie it is, and more plentiful to|ward you, so much y^e more greueth it me, if there be any dishonestie amōg you.

The texte.

¶Yf any man hathe caused sorowe, the same hathe not made me sory, but partelye, <◇> I shoulde greue you all. It is sufficiente vnto the same man, that he was rebuked of many. So that now contrarye wyse ye ought rather to forgeue him and coumforte him, leste the same persone shoulde bee swallowed vp wyth ouer muche heauines. Wherefore I exhort you that loue maye haue strengthe ouer him. For this cause verelye didde I write, that I •ighte knowe the profe of you whether ye shoulde bee obediente in all thynges.

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To whome ye forgeue anye thyng, I forgeue also. For yf I forgaue anye thyng, to whome I forgaue it, for your sakes forgaue I it, in the syght of Christe: leste Satan shoulde preuente vs. For his thoughtes are not vnknownen vnto vs.

And yf any manne haue geuen you occasion to bee sorye, the same hathe not onely made me sorye, synce he hath with me made also all you sorye. As for the manne, (whose name I vtter not, nor yet rehearse the fault, whereof the do|•• is ashamed) is sufficiently punished, in that he was in suche sorte openly rebulked beefore all the people, and auoyded of euerye mannes coumpanye. This muche was done vnto hym, partelye to cure his disease, and partelye to feare o|ther from the lyke. Nowe remaineth this, that ye increase not his sorow, but ra|ther forgeue hym vpon his repentaunce, whom for offence ye abhorred, and cō|fort hym in his sorowe, leste he bee with desperacion swallowed vppe. Where|fore I beseche you, that forasmuche as ye condemned hym euen of loue, and not for displeasure, and for no purpose elles condemned hym, but to the intende he shoulde amende and bee saued, see that he in this fynde youre loue effectuall to|warde him by receauyng hym hartlye and louyngly, whome ye excluded with heauinesse. For this also was another cause, why I wrote these letters vnto you, because I woulde haue a tryall,

whether ye woulde in all poyntes obeye my commaundementes. In condemnyng hym, whome I commaunded to bee condemned, ye obeyed me: and likewyse wyll ye (I truste) obeye me, receauyng hym into youre fauoure, to whome I woulde haue you reconciled, that once wylls maie in euerye poynte agre. Whome so euer ye forgeue anye thing, him forgeue I also, coumptyng my selfe fullye contente, yf I see you satisfied. For if I forgauē anye thyng, for youre sakes forgauē I it, as Iesus Christe is my witnesse and approuer, leste Satan elswise myght take any of ours from vs thorowe desperacion, and vse thē, as his own. Nor are his sleighty thoughtes vnknownen vnto vs, whiche doth not onely lye in watche to disceaue vs by pleasures, but also by heauinesse and sorowe, by thone alluring vs to outrageous offences, by thother casting vs downe headlong into the depe do ungeon of desperacion.

The texte.

When I was come to Troas, for Christes Gospels sake (and a greate doore was open vnto me of the Lorde) I had no reste in my spirite, because I founde not Titus my brother: but toke my leaue of them, and wente awaye into Macedonia. Thankes bee vnto God, whiche alwayes geueth vs the victorie in Christe, and openeth the fauoure of his knowledge by vs in euery place. For we are vnto god the swete fauour of Christe, among them that are saued, and among them whiche perishe. To the one parte are we the sauoure of death vnto death. And vnto the other parte are wee the sauoure of lyfe vnto lyfe: And who is meete vnto those thynges? we are not as the moste parte are, whiche chop and chaunge with the worde of God: but of purenes, and by the power of God, in the sighe of God, so speake we in Christe.

But after that I came to Troas, there to preache the Gospell of Christ, where there was by the fauoure of god a plentiful hope of encrease opened vnto me, greatly was my mynde disguised, because therwyse than I looked, I found not my brother and felowe Titus there, of whome I hadde greate neede, to beare out that greate and weightie matter.

Leauing them therefore I went into Macedonia, and that not without great ieopardye, but thankes geue I vnto god, whiche victoriously carrieth aboute by vs the triumphe of christian religion, makyng it more glorious, by that the glorye of hys Gospell dailye spreadeth more and more, whiche by our preaching enlargeth in all places abrode the knoweledge of hymselfe, vsyng vs, as though we were swete incense. For when we preache in all places of the world the glorye of his gospell, what elles dooe wee, but spreade abrode the swete fauoure of Christe, of it selfe in deede (as I saye) to all menne pleasaunte and holsome, but yet to some

throughe theyr owne faulte deadlye poyson: holsom to suche, as
throughe fayth in the gospell obteyne saluacion, vnholosome and deathlye
to suche, as refuse it, thereby doublyng theyr damnacion to deathe
euerlastyng, as menne encreasyng theyr former offences wyth
vnthankfulnes and stubbernesse of myndes, But who is meete this to
dooe and preache? Whoso myndeth to laboure in this, muste therein
nothyng regarde, but the onely glorie of Christe. But some there bee,
whiche teachyng the gospell either for honoure, or for aduauntage,
spreade not somuche abroad the swete sauers of Christe, as theyr owne
countrefaite deuises, profityng themselves, and no • Christe, whose
manners wee abhorre. Nor corrupte wee the woorde of God wyth
worldlye doctryne sekynge oure own commodities, but euen with a pure
hearte teache it, as a thyng, that came from god, and not of our selves, and
that to the glorie of Iesus Christe, as god hymselfe is witnesse.

¶ The thyrd Chapter.

The texte.

¶ We begin to praise our selues againe. Neede we as some other, of epistles,
of re|commendacion vnto you? or letters of recommendacion from you? Ye
are our epistle writ|ten in our hertes, whiche is vnderstande and red of all
men forasmuche as ye declare that ye are the epistle of Christ, ministred by
vs and written not with inke, but with the spirite of the liuing God, not in
tables of stone but in fleshely tables of the hearte.

B Vt this feare I, leste anye manne thynke, that we agayne prayse
ourselves vnto you: to thyntente wee maye bothe of you & other be had in
price and more esteemed. But what nede hath any man to seke for
commendacions, when the matter self commendeth hym? Nede we such
letters of recommenda|cion, as false apostles carrie about with them,
obteyned ei|ther of other vnto you, or of you to other? Nothing passe we
vpon such letters. The liuely epistle, wherwyth we thinke our selves
suffic|ently praised, are ye Corinthians, written in our heartes, which I
with muche lesse payne carrye aboute with me, than they dooe theyrs.
This epistle in all places where I come, euerye manne readeth and
vnderstandeth, so that I neede none other epistle, synce that by youre
Godlye lyfe, all menne perfeite|ly knowe, what manner of apostles wee
were, and so farre forth assure wee our selves of youre good wyl
toward vs, that seeyng that oure owne diligente la|bor doth abundantly
cōmend vs, wee nede no mens letters of commendacion,

whiles ye in perfite fayth, and christian life, declare that ye are Christes epistle, written by hym in dede, but yet by our ministerie and laboure. Written (I say) not wyth y^oke, as theirs are, which teache humaine and carnall phantasies, but with the spirite of the liuing god: nor written agayne in tables of stone, as mannes lawes are, but in the fleashye tables of the hearte. Your heartes wher|in wee printed the doctrine of the gospell▪ vsed we in steade of parchmente, my tongue was in steade and serued for a penne, but Christe himselfe with his hollye spirite, indited that thing whiche we wrote.

The texte

Suche truste haue we thorowe Christe to Godwarde, not that we are sufficient of ou^o selues to thynke any thing, as of oure selues, but if we be hable vnto any thyng the same cum|methe of God, whiche hathe made vs hable to minstre the newe Testamente, not of the letter but of the spirite. For the letter killeth, but the spirite geueth lyfe. If the ministracion of death thorowe the letters figured in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not be|holde the face of Moses, for the glorie of his countenaunce (whiche glorye is done awaye) why shall not the ministracion of the spirite bee muche more glorious? For if the ministryng of con|demnacion bee glorious, muche more dooth the ministracion of righteousnesse excede in glorye. For no doubt that which was there glorified, is not once glorified in respecte of this excedyng glorie. For if that whiche is destroyed▪ was glorious, muche more that whiche remayneth is glorious. Seeyng then that wee haue suche truste, wee vse greate boldenesse, and dooe not as Moses, whiche putte a vayle ouer his face, that the children of Israell shoulde not see for what purpose that serued whiche is putte awaye. But theyr myndes were blinded. For vntill thys daye remaineth the same coueryng vntaken awaye in the lecture of the olde testament, whiche vayle shalbee putte awaye in Christe. But euen vnto this daye when Moses is re^oad, the ^oa^o hangeth before theyr heartes. Neuerthesse when they tourne to the Lorde, the vayle shall be taken awaye. The Lorde no doubte is a spirite. And where the spirite of the Lorde is, then is libertie. But we all beholde in a mirroure the glorye of the Lorde w^oth his face open, and a^o chaunged vnto the same similitude from glorye to glorye, euen as of the spy^oyte of the Lorde.

But asmuche as the doctrine of the gospell passeth and is better, tha^o Moses lawe: somuche more fruitfull and better is our laboure, than his. Nor yet take we thus muche vpon vs arrogantlye, but speake the trueth, as God is my recorde: whiche by our seruice through Christe perfourmed it, that wee speake of. For had not his healpe bene, certainly farre were we euen from thin|kyng vpon any suche thyng of our owne power, and muche farther from dolyng it. But yf we be eyther hable, or haue bene hable to doe anye thyng, al that came of the free bounteousnesse of God,

whyche as he hathe healped vs •• oure labours, so hath he committed vnto vs this ministerye and dispensacion of the newe testamente, to thentent wee should bestowe among you, not the grosse olde testament, as the false Apostles teache it, and standeth in the know|lege of the letter, the administracion whereof was committed to Moses, but the newe testamente, whiche is heauenly and spirituall, and standeth in affec|cions of mynde and not in ceremonies. The lawe and gospel haue both one mal|ker, but the ministerye• of booth is soondrye, and of the two the apostles is of muche more excellencie. For the letter committed vnto Moses, by reasō of cer|tain rules & lawes driueth men to death, forasmuch as it by occasion both pro|uoketh to sin and also condēneth y• sinner to death: whereas contrarie, y• spirite, whiche is geuen by preachyng the ghospel, both forgeueth the offences of our former lyfe, and to suche as haue deserued deathe, offerethe lyfe. Nowe and yf

the fyrste lawe, whyche beeyng grauen in stone wroughte deathe to the trans|gressour, and gaue no grace, was of such great maiestie and glorie, that when Moses the seconde tyme broughte downe the tables, the Hebrues coude not beeholde his face by reason of the glorie and maiestie of that, whiche was sure once yet to bee abolished: why shoulde not muche rather the ministerye of the Gospell haue his honoure and maiestie, whereby throughe faythe and the free gifte of the spirite euerlastyng saluacion is geuen? Yf the lawe, whiche coude condemne and was not hable to saue, hadde suche honoure, certainlye muche more honoure desearueth the Gospell, by preachyng whereof synne is not onely forgeuen, •ut also rihgteousnesse is geuen. In whiche twoo thinges suche difference is there, that if a manne more narrowely compare eche one of theym with other, that whiche by it selfe is glorious, wyll appeare but base, beyng as it were darkened with the bryght and excellent glorie of the Gospell. For if the lawe, whiche was geuen but for a season, and shoulde wythin a while after bee abrogate, was among menne in suche honoure, of muche more dig|nitie is the lawe of the Gospell, whiche is bothe generallye geuen to all menne and shall neuer bee abolished. For the newe testament, whereby the olde is ab|rogate, Christe hymselfe calleth an euerlasting testamente, as I in my other epistle taught you. Of whiche thyng wee beeyng moste certainlye perswaded and assured, in oure •eachynges vse no darke riddles, but freelye and openlye sette furth the lyghte of the Gospell, surelye beleuyng, that bothe the glorie of this lawe is suche, that it shoulde not bee hidden, and ye of that •ireyngthe and clearnesse of conscience, that ye are hable to looke thereupon. And there|fore wee dooe not, as it is read that Moses didde, whiche when he broughte downe the seconde tables, after that the fyrste were broken, couered hys face with a vayle, that the children of Israell shoulde not

looke thereupon, nor deaue thereto for euer, synce that euen this was a
 proufe and significacion to them, that the glorie of Moses lawe shoulde
 bee abolished, whiche euen at that time, when it was made, was not verye
 glorious, for in vayne is that thyng glorious, whiche a manne canne not
 see. In this figure was represented the grossnesse of that nacion, whiche
 seeyng sawe not, and hearyng hearde not, insomuche that, whiche was
 doone in Moses face, the same was moste verelye done in theyr heartes,
 whiche in them were blynded, beeyng as it were ouercaste, wyth the
 vayne of dulnesse. Yea and in this daye the blyndenesse remaineth in that
 nacion stille, so that when they reade the bookes of the lawe they
 vnderstande theym not: and with stubberne myndes of a zeale towarde
 the lawe refuse hym, at whose commyng the lawe selfe graunteth that she
 shall bee abolysed. Therefore when they in suche sorte reade the olde
 testament, that they wyll not embrace the newe promysed therein, holde
 they not faste Moses vayne, nor see by faythe castyng of the same, that
 through Christe all the darkenesse of the lawe is a brogate?
 Stubbornelye yet stycke they to theyr Moses, when he is cumme, to
 whome Moses bade them geue eare. Hym reade they in theyr synagoges,
 but they reade hym carnallye, sekynge for nothyng but corporall thynges,
 wheras the lawe, if menne well loke thereupon, is in deede spiritual▪
 Letted are they doubtesse euen vntyll this day, wyth a vayne cast ouer
 theyr heartes, which is remoued through fayth in the gospell.

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But when the tyme shall come, that they shall leaue theyr grosse myndes,
 and receauyng the vniuersall fayth tourne vnto the Lorde, then shall
 theyr vayne be taken away, so that they shall see suche thynges, as without
 the bryght eyes of fayth can not be seen▪ Moses was grosse and carnall,
 but the Lorde Iesus is a spirite, not teachyng suche thynges, as maye bee
 seene with oure bodyly eyes, but thynges inuisible, whiche are by fayth
 beleued. Moses law, because it with feare of punishement kepte menne
 in ordre, was a lawe of thraldome, and the vayne also is a token of
 bondage. But where the spirite of the Lorde Iesus is, whiche secretlye
 moueth a manne withoute byddyng and compulsion to lead▪ a Godlye
 lyfe, there is libertie. No manne is compelled to beleue: but he that
 beleueth, as he shoulde, of his own accomde auoydeth filthines, and
 vncleanes of lyfe, and foloweth al goodnesse, dooyng more wyllinglye by
 the mocion of charitie, than coulde euer begotten of the lewes wyth feare
 of punishement. Blinde are they therefore, that lacke the eyes of faythe:
 when we throughe pure fayth without vayne beholde the glorye of the
 Lorde, whose brightnes whiles we receyue, as a glasse, altered are we
 after a sorte into the same glorye, plentifully powring vpon other that
 brightnes which we receyued of God. And as then Moses face, by that he
 talked with god, shyned euen as glasse doothe layed againste the sonne,
 so is oure soule euerye daye more and more secretlye enamoured,

encreasing from glory to glory by reason of the continual conuersalcion of the spirite of God, who inuisibly nowe woorkethe in vs that whiche hereafter shal openlye bee accomplished.

The fourth Chapter.

The texte

¶Therefore, seeyng that we haue suche an office, euen as God hath hadde mer|cye on vs, wee goe not out of kynde: but haue caste from vs the clokes of vn honestie, and walke not in craftines, neyther handle we the woorde of God discreatefullye, but open the trueth, and reporte our selues to euerye mannes conscience in the sighte of GOD. If oure Gospell bee yet hydde, it is hidde among them that are loste, in whome the God of this worlde hath blinded the mindes of them whiche beleue not, leste the light of the gos|pell of the glorie of Christe (whiche is the image of God) shoulde shyne vnto them.

SYnce then god of his mercy would haue vs to bee ministers and preachers of suche a blisfull state, geuyng vnto vs the authoritie of an apostle, we execute not oure commission •louthfullye, but as we preache a veraye gloriouse matter, so refuse we all clokes whiche are meete for dishonestie, and not for glorye, neyther leadyng oure lyfe craftely, nor with deceitfulnes of woorldely learning, corruptyng the woorde of god, but frealy and playnly, and without all deceyte, declaryng to al men the bare trouthe, without any cloud, in this office so vsing our selves, that though no manne prayse vs, yet oure lyfe commendeth vs to all menne, whiche knowe and are witnesse of oure perfectnes, and not onelye to menne, whiche maye bee deceyued but also to God whiche seethe all thynges. By vs therefore in al places shyneth the trueth of the gospel, so that euerye man may see it euedently. And yf there be some yet to whome it is not knowen, and therefore geueth not

them saluacion, the faulte is theirs, and not ours, nor the gospels. for as I tolde you of the Israelites, so haue they likewyse a vayle caste ouer the eyes of theyr hearte, by reason wherof they see not suche thinges, as are velrye bright, but are blynde in the middes of the sonne light. For they bryng with them vn cleare iyen, and suche as are corrupte with worldlye desyres, whose vnfaythfull myndes, Satan the God of this worlde (for theyr God make they hym, whiche to hym geue more eare, than to the true God) hathe blynded, couering theyr iyes, that to them the bryghtnes of the gospel can geue no light, whereby the glory and maiestie is

declared, not of Moses, but of Christe, whiche is the image of god the father, so that by the sonne, which is egall to the father, a man maye knowe the father.

The texte.

For we preache not oure selues, but Christe Iesus to be the Lord, and our selues your seruauntes, for Iesus sake. For it is God, that cōmaunded the lyght to shyne out of darknes, whiche hath st•yned in our hertes, for to geue the lyght of the knowledge of the glory of god, in the face of Iesus Chryst. But we haue this treasure in erthen vessels, that the ex|cellency of the power myght be Gods, and not oures. We are troubled on euery iye, yet are we not without shyfte. We are in pouerty• but not vtterly without somewhat. We suffer persecucion: but are not forsaken therein. We are cast downe: neuerthelesse we peryshe not. We all wayes beare aboute in the body, the dying of the Lorde Iesus, that the lyfe of Iesu myght also appeare in our body. For we whiche •ue, are alwayes delyuered vnto death for Iesus sake, that the lyfe also of Iesu might appeare in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in vs, but lyfe in you.

Nor auaunce we oure selues by preachyng, as some doe, teachyng the gospell for our aduauntage or glorie, but we preache Iesus Christe oure Lorde, his doctrine teache we and not ours: for hym labour we, as for oure Lorde and mayster, what payne soeuer we take, so farre from takyng anye thyng arrogātly vpon vs, that we graunt our selues to be your seruauntes, and to minstre the ghospell vnto you, neither for feare of you, nor yet for hope of aduauntage, but for Iesus sake: for whose loue, whereas we are free, we euen as seruauntes submitte our selues to all men. After lyke sorte were we once in the same blyndnes, wherewith some are now diseased stil. Nor yet gotte we this light to our selues, but god, at whose commaundement lyght was fyrste made, from whome all light procedeth, after that he had expelled the darknes of oure vnderstandyng, commaunded, that in it the lighte of trueth shoulde appere, or rather, as he is lighte euerlastyng, lightened oure hearte y• by vs the glory of his maiestie might more be spread abroad among all mē, beyng more notified by preachyng of the gospel, wherein we preache * the Lorde Iesus, in whose face moste brightly shineth the image and glorie of the father. But yet is this greate matier onely wrought in our soules selcretely: for touchyng the bodye, we seme, but vyle abiectes, so that we •arie aboute with vs this precieuse and highe treasure in earthen vessels, that is to saye in our sealye bodies, subiecte to vilanye and punishment: as it hathe pleased god, it should be, and good cause is there, why it so pleased hym. For he prouided, y• we should not be proude by great & high myracles wroughte by vs, whereby we might clayme some parte therof, but know our owne infirmitie, and so vnderstande the selfe same highe power, whiche is geuen to the apostles, not to be wrought by our

strengthe, but by gods power onely: for we touchyng our owne infirmitie, are dayly greatly troubled, and yet by

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gods helps we suffer al these troubles, and continue not ouercomen, we are on euery syde ouerlayed with aduersitie, yet are we not withoute shifte, we are brought to beggery, and in oure beggerye we are not forsaken, we suffer persecucion, and yet in our persecucion we are not dismayed, we are beaten downe and tredden vnder feete, but yet so, that we peryshe not, in that belhalfe folowyng the lorde Iesus▪ as nyghe as we maye, whome we preache and setfoorth. He once dyed for all men, we, in that we are daylye and continuallye in ieopardie of death, beare aboute in oure bodyes an image of his deathe, ready to bestowe this lyfe for your sakes: that as we dyeng for you folowe the death of Iesus, so maye the lyfe of Iesus wherunto he rose from deathe, in oure body be declared, whyles we are either by hym delyuered from deathe, or by despising oure temporal lyfe, playnly testifie and affirme, that the deade shall ryse agayne. For yf we beleued, that when our bodye is once dead, it woulde neuer lyue more, we woulde not so lytle regarde oure temporall lyfe. By thys straunge waye therfore ye see, howe the euerlasting lyfe of Christ, through the afflictions of our corruptible body, is to you the better knowen. The difference is, in that the violent ieoperdy of death falleth vpon oure body, but the fruite of lyfe, which groweth by our deathe, is yours, for whose sakes we put our selues in these ieopardyes.

The texte.

But seyng that we haue the same spirite of fayth (accordyng as it is wryttē: I beleued, & therfore I spoken:) we also beleue, and therfore speake. For we know that he which rayseed vp the Lorde Iesus, shall rayse vp vs also by the meanes of Iesus, and shall set vs with you. For all thynges do I for your sakes that the plenteous grace by thanckes geuen of many, maye redounde to the prayse of God. Wherefore, we are not weryed. But though our vtward man peryshe, yet the inwarde man is renewed daye by daye. For out ●●●buiacyon which is momentany & lyght, prepareth an exceedyng and an eternal waight of glorye vnto vs, whyle we loke not on the thynges whiche are sene, but on the thynges whiche are not sene. For the thynges whiche are seue, are temporall: but thynges whiche are not sene, are eternall.

And yet for all this we repente vs not of preachyng the gospel: for since we haue also euen the same gifte of faythe, that ye haue, whereby ye loke for life immortall, by my preachyng powred into your heartes, it foloweth, that as Dauid in his misticall psalme sayeth, that he therfore spoke,

because he beleued: so feare we nothyng, no not with ieopardye of oure lyfe, to preache the trueth of the gospel, vndoubtedly assuryng our selues, that he, whiche rayseed the lorde Iesus from death, wyll through hym rayse vs agayne dy|ling for his sake, and bryng vs all together to the generall glorie of resur|reccion, as we are here in lyke fayth knytte together. But whether in the meane season we be troubled, or deliuered from trouble, all is done for your sakes that the trueth of the gospel maye be more spread abrode among you, that the more amende theyr lyfe, so manye more geue thanks, not to vs, but to god, to whose glorie it appertayneth, that his faithe, which he would haue cōmen to all men, be moste plentifully enlarged. In hope and sure cō|fidence that it will so be, no troubles werye vs, but through them we rather ware stronger, knowing wel, that albeit oure vtwarde body be by litle and litle worne awaye, yet our inwarde and better parte in the dayely and con|tinuall decaye of the body, becometh more quicke and sustie, as it were with miseries growyng yong agayne, and beginnyng to taste of before, the lyfe euerlastyng to come.

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For albeit the bodely affliction whiche we for the gosselles sake abyde, be lyght and transitory, yet lyght as it is, it prepareth in vs no small, but an excedyng and an vnspeakable weight of glory, whyles both for suche tran|sitory tormentes suffered for Christes sake we are made worthy of blysse euerlastyng, and for temporall deathe sustayned for hym we receaue the re|warde of euerlastyng lyfe, in hope wherof we lytle esteeme oure bodyly lyfe, not somuche passing vpon suche thynges as are seene with owre bodylye eyes, as vpon suche, as are not seene, but only with the eyes of faythe. For suche thinges, as are sene here in this world, beside that they are thinges neilther throughly good, nor throughly bad, of whiche sorte are lucre, honoure, pleasure, lyfe, losse of godes, reproche, tormentes and deathe, are also not continuallye abydyng, whereas suche thinges, as are sene with the eyes of faythe, are bothe trewe ryches, and suche as wyll endure for euer.

The .v. Chapter.

The texte.

For we knowe that yf oute earthly mansyon of thys dwellyng were destroyed, we haue a byldyng of God, an habitacyon not made with handes, but eternall in heauen. For ther|fore sygh we, desyryng to bee clothed with oure mansyon whiche is from heauen: so yet, yf that we be founde clothed, and not naked. For we that are in thys tabernacie, sygh and are greued because we would not be vnclothed, but would be clothed vpon, that mortalitie myght be swallowed vp of lyfe. He that hath ordeyned vs for thys

thyng; is God: whiche very same hathe geuen vnto vs the erneste of the spirite.

ANd vpon thys sure truste, certaynly lytle regarde we euen oure lyfe, knowinge well, that yf it chaunce our soules in this worlde to be chaced out of the mansion of oure bodye, (whiche I myght more properly call a tent, than a mansion, being suche, as a manne maye not long tary in, though nomanne dryue hym thence) that we haue prepared for vs another howse in heauen, from whence we shall neuer be excluded. As for this howse of oures, because it is made of claye, and buylded by manne, whether we wyll or not, decayeth dayly, albeit no man pull it downe, euen as we see other buyldynges in continuaunce of tyme to be destroyed. Mennes workmanshype can not be of longe continuaunce, but that, whiche is repayred by god, and once becomen heauenly, is out of all suche ieopardies, as chaunce by reason of tyme. And so lytle feare we to departe out of this wretched body, that vntyl that be, we sygh, here desyring to be discharged of the burdayne of our mortal carkas, wherewith our soule is here in earth much burdeyned and kept downe, desyrouse to flye hence to another place, and to be clothed with the mansion of a gloryfied body, which shall from heauen be gyuen vnto vs: so that when we bee vnclothed of this bodye, we bee not founde vtterly naked, but through a confidence of our good lyfe clothed with the hope of lyfe immortall. For we grone in thys meane season for the heuynes of oure bodye thrall and subiecte to so manye miseries, not because it is a thyng of it selfe to bee desyred of any man to departe hence, but because we desyre to haue this bodye restored into a better fourme, and for mortalitie, by rysyng againe to receaue immortalitie, so that we seme not vtterly spoyled of the bodye, whiche we for a tyme forsoke, but better clothed with the same, as who for a corruptible bodye shall receaue an incorruptible.

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And albeit this seme neuer so vnlikely, that there shall for a mortall body ryse an immortall, fre from all miseries, yet muste we not mistruste the sonne. It is god, whiche hathe prepared vs to receaue the glory of lyfe immortall, who hathe also in the meane season gyuen vs, as a pledge or an earnest pelyny, his holy spirite, to confirme and establyshe vs with his present inspira|cion, in hope of that, whiche is to come.

The texte.

Therefore, we are alwaye of good cheare, and knowe, that as longe as we are at home in the body, we are absent from God. For we walke in fayth, not

after the outwarde ap|pearaunce. Neuerthelesse, we are of good comforte, and had leuer to be absent from the boldy, and to be present with God. Wherefore, whether we be at home or from home, we ende|uour our selues, to please hym. For we must al appeare before the iudgement seate of Christ, that euery man may receaue the workes of his body, accordyng to that he hath done, whe|ther it be good or bad. Seyng then that we knowe, how the Lorde is to be feared, we fate fayre with men. For we are knowen wel enough vnto god. I trust also that we are knowen in your consciences. For we prayse not our selues agayne vnto you, but geue you an occasy|on to reioyce of vs, that ye maye haue somewhat agaynst them, which reioyce in the face, and not in the hearte. For yf we bee to feruente, to God are we to feruent. Or yf we kepe measure, for your cause kepe we measure. For the loue of Christ constra|yneth vs, because we thus iudge, that yf one dyed for al, then were all dead & he dyed for al▪ that they which lyue, should not hence furth lyue vnto themselues, but vnto him which dyed for them, and rose agayne. Wherefore, henceforth knowe we no man after the fleshe. In somuche though we haue knowen Christ after the flesh, now yet hence forth know we him so nomore. Ther|fore yf any man be in Christ, he is a newe creature. Olde thynges are passed away: behold, all thynges are become newe. Neuertheles, all thinges are of God, whiche hathe recon|cyled vs vnto hymself by Iesus Chryst, and hathe geuen to vs the office to preache the at|tonement. For God was in Chryste, and made agrement betwene the worlde and hym selfe, and imputed not theyr synnes vnto them, & hath commytted to vs the preachyng of the attonement. Now then are we messengers in the rowme of Christe, euen as thoughe God dyd beseche you thorowe vs: So praye we you in Christes stede, that ye be reconcyled vnto God: for he made hym to bee synne for vs, whiche knewe no synne, that we by hys meanes shoulde bee that rightewesnes, which before God is allowed.

And therefore what tempestes soeuer befall vs, alwayes are we of good there, knowing, that as long as we are at home in thys bodylye mansion, we straye abrode, and are deuided from god, to whome by departure out of it, we are more nyghly ioyned: not meanyng so, that god is not for thys presente tyme with vs, but that he is not yet so clearly sene, as he shall bee then. For albeit in the meane season he bee after a sorte seene by faythe, yet is it, as it were a farre of, whiche shall then presently bee seene, euen as he is end not obscurely. And therefore yf the pleasure of god bee, that we in this body shall yet suffer more afflictions, in good hope stande we, that we shal easily suffer them in hope of the rewarde to come: and yet is thys of vs muche more to bee desyred, to departe (I saye) out of thys bodylye mansion, that after suche departure, we may be more nyghly ioyned to god. Ther|fore whether we bee compelled to continewe in thys house, orels, (as we muche more desyre) to departe hence, that is to saye, whether we lyue or dye, all our endeuoure is to bee allowed of god. For vnles a manne departe hence in goddes fauer, let hym not loke for the rewarde of immortall lyfe, whiche poynte I gyue you warnyng of, leste any thinke baptisme a meane sufficient therunto without

godly lyuyng. As for wycked synners to theyr damnacion they receaue agayne bodyes, whiche they here abused in theyr owne synfull lustes, and not to the glory of god.

And as euery mans deseartes haue been for this lyfe, suche shall his re|warde be: what euery manns deseartes are, is a thyng as yet vnkowen, but yet must al we in open syght of the worlde appeare before the iudge|ment seate of Christe, where nothyng shalbe hydden, but euery man shal reape, as he hath sowed in hys body: and when body and soule are ioy|ned together, enioy suche reward as his workes were, whyles he here liued, whether they were good or badde. We therfore hauing alway that terrible daye before our eyes, diligently laboure in all poyntes to please both God & man. For albeit we deceiue men with some counterfaite kynd* of holynes, yet doth God throughly knowe vs, as which seeth euen the very bottome of our heartes, whiche thyng no man can do. Howbeit my trust is, that I haue in such sort vsed my selfe amōg you, that ye throughlly knowe and perceaue the synceritie of my lyfe, for with this glorie are we contented. For we auauunce not our office agayne, eyther because we would of you be more made of, or because we seke for any aduaūtage at your handes: but forasmuch as I perceiue, that some make greate boste, for that they were assigned vnto theyr office by chiefe Apostles, we geue you occasion to glory lykewyse of vs agaynste them, whiche for this re|spect lytle set by you, because ye haue but an abiect and a vile one to your Apostle: which albeit sawe not the Lorde in his mortall bodye, as other Apostles dyd, yet sawe I hym immortall, and of hym receiued myne Alpostleshyp, as other dyd, and haue by hys helpe done no lesse, than other haue. This rehearse I for your sakes, because ye shoulde haue some thing wherwith to aunswere them, which being not contented with the prayse of their owne conscience for their good dedes, with high & proude lookes seke for worldly commendacion, wheras their consiēces do inwardly cō|demnethē.* Nothing speake we for our own sakes: but whether we speake of our great actes, and therby seame to be peuishe, peuishe are we to god|warde, to whose glory we rehearse such thinges, as we by his helpe did: or yf we kepe a measure in speakyng of our selves, & therby seme wise, to you are we wise, to whose weaknes we tēper our tale. We make not our selves equal with other Apostles by boastyng, but the loue of Christ con|strayneth vs openly to speake that thing, which appertayneth to his glo|ry. For to his praise maketh it, & not to ours, if there were by vs, through his gyft, any thing notable done, that all people should the better knowe, howe his death was not vnfruitfull, forasmuch as it doth indifferentlye profite al people, so farfurth, that euen by vs whom thei despise, it shew|eth his power, and not by them only, which sawe Christ in his manhode, nor by such only, as haue carnal allyaunce with him. But rather this wise reason we the matter with our

selfe: yf Christe alone indifferently dyed for al, than foloweth it, that generally all such people were before thrall and subiecte to death, as his pleasure was by his death to redeame from death. And because he woulde haue all men indifferentlye bounde vnto hym, therfore dyed he for all, that suche as by hys benefite lyue, beyng through hym newe borne agayn, shoulde no longer lyue to themselves, but to hym, whiche boeth dyed and rose agayne for them.

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By this should men be esteemed, and not by carnall affinitie. Yea and albeit we maye glory our selves of the stocke of Iewes, yet synce that tyme we professed Christes religion, we knowe no man, because he is one of our stocke, but coumpte suche of our kynred, as are by lyke fayth ioyned vnto vs. A vayne crake is it therfore, whiche some make, that they be Christes owne countrey men, or els because they are his kynsmen, and lyued familiarily with him: his fleshe was geuen but for a season presently, but now synce that his body is taken awaye, and his holy spirite sent, his wil and pleasure is to be knowen after the spirite, and coumpteth hym nyghest of his kynne, whiche hath in his promisses moste affiaunce. Nor let any man for this cause lesse esteme vs, which are later Apostles, because we knew not Christe lyuing here in earth in his mortal body, synce that, yf we had so knowē hym in dede, now yet would we haue forgone that knowledge, as which hyndred the spirite, and woulde nowe, synce that he is become spirituall, loue hym spiritually. Whoso therfore is through baptisme^{*} graffed into Christ, let hym forsake his olde phantasies, nor thinke, thys man is a Iewe, that man is a Grecian, this a bonde man, and that is a fre man, but remembre rather, howe that euery man, which is borne agayne to be a newe man, is of a carnall man becomen a spirituall. Olde thinges are paste and gone, and beholde, through Christ al thinges are so day^oly made new. Away therfore with these wordes: this is a Greciā, this is an aliaunt, this is a Iewe, this is a worshyper of idoles, this is a spoyler of holy places. The man hath forsaken to be suche as he was, & is by the workmanshyps of Christ, altered into a newe creature, so vnlyke to that he was, that no beast is there more vnlyke a man. But whatsoeuer is geuen vs by him, al that came frō the father, which reconciled vs vnto himselfe, vāquishing sinne by his sonne Iesus Christ: the preaching of which recō|ciliacion, the same father hath put vs in trust with, that as the sōne among men dyd his fathers message, so should we execute and doe Christes mes|sage. For albeit Christ, when he was here mortall in earth among mortall men, semed but a simple man, yet was God the father in him, reconciling^{*} by his ministry the worlde vnto himselfe, & by him making it new again, by whom once he made the worlde, and with such mercy receyued men in|to his fauer, that he not onely toke no vengeance vpon vs for the sinnes of oure for merlyfe, but also would not asmuch as laie vnto any mannes charge hys synnes done

before baptisme, as though he now were not the same manne he was before. This fauourable reconciliacion it pleased God the father to gyue by his sonne, and woulde haue the same to bee preached by vs. We therefore in Chrstes behalfe executing the ambassage commytted by hym vnto vs, euen as God exhorted you by vs, beseche you in Christes name, to leaue your olde vyces, and to bee reconcyled to God. For he, to the intente he would once delyuer vs from sinne, where his sonne is verie iustyce selfe, altered him in maner into sinne, that he ralkyng our flesh vpon hym, which in vs is subiecte to synne, should become a sacrifice to purge our sinnes, and as a hainous offender among offenders was fastened to the crosse, to the entente that by hym he myght chaunge vs, whiche were nothyng els but synne, into ryghteousnesse, not into our ryghteousnesse, nor yet the ryghteousnesse of the law neither, but of God,

by whose fre goodnes our sinnes are forgeuen, that he hencefurth myght take vs for righteous being planted in Christe, who for our sakes vsed Christe as a synner.

¶ The .vi. Chapter.

The texte.

We also as helpers exhorte you that ye receyue not the grace of God in vayne. For he sayeth: I haue heard the in a time accepted: and in the day of saluacion, haue I suckered the. Behold, now is that accepted time: behold now is that day of saluacion. Let vs geue no occasion of euyl, that in out offyce be founde no faute: but in all thynges let vs behaue our selves as the ministers of God. In much pacience, in afflictions, in necessities, in anguishes, in stripes, in prisonmentes, in strydes, in labours, in watchinges, in fastinges, in purenesse, in knowledge, in long sufferyng, in kyndenesse, in the hoy ghost, in loue vnfayned, in the woorde of trueth, in the power of God, by the armour of rightewesnes of the right hand and on the leaft: by honour and dishonour: by euil reporte and good reporte: as deceyuers, and yet true: as vnknown, and yet known: as dying, and beholde we lyue, as chastened, and not kyled: as sorowyng, and yet alwaye mery: as poore, and yet make many ryche: as hauing nothing, and yet possessing al thinges. O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open vnto you. Our herte is made large: ye are in no straye in vs: but are in a straye in your owne bowelles. I promyse vnto you lyke rewarde, as vnto chyl dren. Sette your selves at large, & beare not the yoke with the vnbeleuers. For what feloshyp hath rightewesnes with vnrightewesnes? Or what cōpany hath light with darkenes? Or what concord hath Christ with Belial? Either what part hath he that beleueth with an infidel? Or how agreeth the temple of God with images? For ye are the temple of the liuing God, as sayed God: I wil

dwell among them, & walke among them, & wylbe their God, and they shalbe my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and sepatate your selves from them (sayeth the Lord) and touche none vncleane thyng: so will I receyue you, & wyl be a father vnto you and ye shalbe my sonnes and daughters, sayeth the Lorde almyghtie.

SO would Christ, and so would God, ye should do, that his benefite should in you take effecte. We therfore as helpers both executyng Gods wil, and also prouiding for your weale, beseche you, that synce your sinnes, are once freely forgeuen, that ye nomore falle to your olde lyuyng, and thereby shewe, that ye haue receyued the grace of God in vayne. Yf it chaunce vs for this present tyme to fall, we may amende, but we shall not alwaye be able so to doe. For in the Prophete Esai this speaketh God: in a tyme accepted haue I heard the, and in the daye of saluacion haue I suckered the. Beholde now is the accepted tyme promysed by God, and fauourable, wherin God relfuseth not the synner, that repenteth with all his herte: beholde, nowe is the daye, wherein we may, lyuyng godly, obtayne saluacion. After this tyme wyll folowe that terrible daye, wherin we shall in vayne seke to be reconciled. We therfore in this behalfe laboryng to doe our dueties take hede, that we in no poynt geue any man occasion of euil, leste by our fault the gospell of Christ, wherof we are ministers, be reproued and blamed: as it might be, if we leade our liues, as men not beleuing such thinges, as we teache other, but in al poyntes shew our selves to be such in dede, as it is conuenient they be, which labour in Gods seruice, and not in their own. And howe proue we our selves to be suche in dede? surely, neither with high lokes, nor with bādes of men, nor with gaynes taking, nor by charlgeyng

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menne with ceremonies, as some doe, but euen as Christ approued hymselfe, that is to saye, with mucche pacience, with dayly afflictions, ne|cessities, distreasses, with sufferaunce of stripes, enprisonmentes, suffel|ryng sedicions, fastyng, cleannesse of lyfe, with apostolique knowledge, courteousnesse, kyndnesse, with the holy ghoste, with pure and vnfayned charitie, and with the woorde of trueth, bolde in all enterpryses, not vpon any worldly strength, but vpon the power of God, not furnished with ^{*}weapons, nor with any worldely defence, but on euery syde surely fensed with the armour of iustice, on the ryght hande, with an vpryght conscience, that we in prosperitie waxe not proude, and with thesame on the lefte syde also, that we be not in aduersities dismayed. And vpon trust of this helpe of God, we through all ieopardies thruste and breake in to preache the ghospell: through honoure and dishonour, through good relporte and euyll, coumpted for deceyuers, whereas we tell trueth, taken

for menne vnknownen, whereas we are knownen: lyke to suche as are a dyling, when as ye see, we lyue: as menne chastened, and not kylled, as menne beyng sorie, whereas we are alwayes meary: as poore menne, when yet we euryche many: as menne, that haue nothyng, and yet by Christe possesse all thynges, and shoulde through the peoples charitie bee more enryched, than are other with all theyr patrimonie, yf we lusted to vse our ryght. But whither am I plucked with the vehemence of this my tale? So moued am I that I cannot refraine, but vtter vnto you al my mynde. For towarde you, ye Corinthians, my mouthe is open, and my heart enlarged. Suche a confidence haue I in you, so bolde am I to glory of you. Synce I lothe not my condicion, repente ye not of yours. Yf ye contente my mynde, bothe haue I cause to glory of you, and ye no lesse cause to reioyce of me, and without cause are ye, why ye should for my sake be of a straight and narrow mynde. So that yf in you there be any straitnes, the same groweth of your euyl myndes. For your welth I leaue nothyng vndone and vnsuffered, but ye towarde me agayne beare not lyke loue. I in hope of resurreccion, and of loue borne toward you, manfully abyde^{*} and suffer all troubles: and synce ye looke to haue thesame rewarde, synce I haue hetherto loued you lyke a father, meete is it, that ye in strength of myndes resemble your father, which vnreadines I lay not vn|to your charges, as to mine aduersaries, but rehearse it, as to my dearely beloued chyl dren. Despise the watryshe ceremonies of the Iewes. Des|pise the worlde, and trust to suche good thynges, as are verely yours. Of a vyle and straite mynde it cummeth to bee contente with presente thynges. Of a straite mynde is it to desyre nothyng but these worldely vanities, whiche wyll soone after peryshe. Christe for you is abundant|ly ryche, abundantly gloryouse, abundantly myghtie, and welthy, let hym be sufficient for you, hym embrace ye with all your heartes. Knowe your condicion, and looke vpon your welthy state, and coumpt your selfe greater, than with vnbelieuers to haue any thing a doe. There is betwixt you and them more difference, than wyll suffre you to be yoked together. For what agrement can there be betwixt ryghteousnes and vnryghteous|nesse

and vnryghteousnesse? or what companie hathe lyght with darke|nesse? or what concorde hathe Christe with Beliall? The goddes are diuerse, the religions diuerse, diuerse maners, and diuerse hopes. Howe agreeth the temple of God with heathen images? For ye are the temple of the lyuyng God, as God hymselfe in holy scriptures testifieth saying: I wyll dwell among them, and walke among them, and wyl be theyr God, and they againe shalbee a people specially consecrate and halowed vnto me. Yf the Iewes then abhorre a Gentile, as vnpure and cursed, and flye his infeccion, come ye good people which are verely consecrate to the ly|uyng God, out of the companie of the vnreligious, kepe your selves out of theyr felowshyppes, as

the Lord by the Prophete Esai exhorteth you, saying: synce ye are holy, touche no vncleane thyng. Wycked maners are verily vncleane, and full of ieopardouse contagion, with whose com|pany beware, leste your cleannes be defiled. But when I this counsell you to flie, that standeth not somuche in chaungyng of your places, as in chaungyng your myndes. Yf ye this doe, then wyll I knowledge you, and receyue you holy, as I am holy my selfe: then shall ye fynde me as a father, and I will embrace you as my sonnes: so saieth the Lord almigh|tye, lesse ye myght mystruste the promise maker.

¶ The .vii. Chapter.

The texte.

Seyng that we haue suche promyses (dearly beloued) let vs clense our selues from all •lthynesse of the fleshe and spyrite, and growe vp to full holinesse with the feare of God. Vnderstande vs▪ we haue hurte no manne: we haue corrupte no manne: we haue defrauld no manne. I speake not this to condemne you: for I haue shewed you before, that ye are in our heartes to dye and lyue▪ with you. I am very bolde ouer you. I reioyce greatly in you. I am fylled with comforte, and am e•ceding ioyous in all our tribulacion. For when we were come into Macedonia, our fleshe had no rest: but we were troubled on eluery syde. Outwarde was fightyng, inwarde was feare. Neuerthelesse, God that com|forteth the abiecte, comforted vs by the cummyng of Titus. And not by his cummyng onelly but also by the consolacion whiche we receyued of you: when he tolde vs your desyre, your feruente mynde for me, so that I reioysed the more. For though I made you sorye with a letter▪ I repente not•th •uch I dyd repente. For I perceyue that thesame Epistle made you sorye, thought it were but for a season. But I nowe reioyce, not that ye were sorye, but that ye so sorowed that ye repented. For ye sorowed godly: so that in no|thyng ye were hurte by vs. For godly sorowe causeth repentaunce vnto saluacion, not to bee repented of▪ contrary wyse worldely sorowe causeth death. For beholde, what dilligen•• this godly sorowe that ye tooke, hathe wrought in you: yea, it caused you to cleare youre selues. It caused indignacion, it caused feare, it caused desyre, it caused punyshment. For in all thynges ye haue shewed your selues, that ye were cleare in that matter. Wherefore, though I wrote vnto you, I dyd it not for his cause that had done the hurte, neyther for his cause that was hurte▪ but that your good mynde for vs myght appeare almong you in the syght of God. Therefore, we are comforted, because ye are comfor|ted: yea and erceadynglye the more ioyed we, for the ioy that Titus hadde: bel|cause his spyryte was refreshed of you all. I am therefore not nowe ashamed though I

•••sted my selfe to hym of you. For as all thynges whiche we speake vnto you are true, eluen so our boasting, that I made vnto Titus, is founde true. And his

inwarde affeccion is more abundant towarde you, when he remembreth the obedience of you all: howe with •care & trembling ye receyued him. I reioyce that I may be bolde ouer you in al thinges.

V Pon sure trust of suche promyses of God therfore, let vs so vse our selves, dearly beloued, that we seme worlthy thesame, cleansyng our selves not onely from all filthynesse of body, but also of the soule, that we both may leade a hurtlesse lyfe among menne, and haue therwith an vpryght harte to God, furnyshed with full and perfite holynesse agaynste the cummyng of Christe: in the meane season doyng our dueties, not of dissimulacion, as Hypocrites doe, but for feare of God, who geueth euery manne reward accordyng to his deseartes. So wyde and large is the loue, whiche I beare towarde you, that I claspe and embrace you all together with my whole harte: relceiue ye me lykewise, as I am, into your hartes, specially synce that ye relceyue other, which both loue you lesse, and are with their costly fyndyng and disdaynfulnesse, chargeable vnto you, and besyde this, lode you also with ceremonies. Neuer hurte we any of you, nor with false learning* corrupted any of you, nor violently exacted ought of any man: whiche ye muste not take as spoken to condemne or reiecte you, but to make you the better. For by that I haue already wryten vnto you, it may be clearly perceyued, that I with all my harte loue you, and am with the stronge bande of charitie so knytte vnto you, that I am readie bothe to lyue and dye with you. Suche a greate trust haue I in you, that vpon youre head I dare waraute any thyng, and greate cause haue I to glorye of you, whome I haue in all poyntes founde obediente.

For your offence I letted not freely to reprove you, but nowe I see you amended, my harte is so coumforted, and so full of gladnesse am I, that in all myne afflictions, whiche was elswyse in many daungerouse stormes, it clearly wyped a waye all the sorowe of my mynde, takyng it as a pleasure to suffer for suche mennes sakes. For when we were comen into Macedonia, my bodye hadde no reste, but it was troubled on euery syde. Outwardlye vexed by suche as aduersaries fought agaynste the ghospell, inwardlye through feare, leste false Apostles by some craftie meanes myght peruerte you: of the aduersaries of the ghospell beaten were we, for other were we afrayed, leste they beeyng dismayed with oure miserable state myght despayre. But God whiche coumforteth the lowe and abiecte persons, coumforted and relfreshed vs by the cummyng of Titus, not onely because he was come,* whose companie I specially desyred, but also because he came from you merye and gladde. And as he was by you made merye, so made he me gladde and merye lykewyse, when he tolde me, howe desylrouse ye were of me, howe ye weap•e and wayled, because that

beeyng offended I came not yet vnto you: and shewed me moreouer, howe
 diligently ye obeyed my cōmaundementes, insomuche that when I was of
 this enfourmed by Titus, I toke more pleasure of your diligence in your
 a|mendment, than I was sad through your offences. Lothe am I at any time
 to make you sorye, but yet synce that fortunēd wel, I repent me not, for that
 in my other letters I made you sadde, albeit I before dyd repente. For
 although thesame Epistle, whiche was bothe to you and me sorowful, for a
 season made you sorye, yet am I now well therewith pleased, not because
 we made you sorye, but because that sorowe broughte you to repen|taunce.
 This worlde hathe in it a certayne kynde of sorowe, vnfruitefull and
 hurtefull as when menne either for losse of money, or for losyng theyr
 pleasures, or for wrathe and enuye are disquieted in theyr myndes. There is
 in Christian religion also a certayne sorowe, but suche as is profitable and
 good, by meane wherof ye are so farre from beyng the worse by me, that by
 thesame ye are well amended and become godly. For he that is for this
 sorye, because he hath displeased god, sheweth thereby, that he is
 amended: * and sorowe after this sorte so bringeth one to repentaunce, that
 it suffereth a manne no more to fall agayne vnto his olde faultes. But
 contrarywise the sorowe, whiche groweth of worldelye desyres, worketh
 death and is hurtefull bothe to bodye and soule. Dooeth not youre state
 declare this ma|ner? For what a diligence hathe this godlye sorowe of
 youre wroughte in you? What speake I of diligence? I myghte muche rather
 saye a sa|tisfaction, wherewith to me ye haue cleared youre selues,
 playnelye shew|yng, that ye approue not that vnhappie deede: yea I mighte
 saye an indig|nacion, as who were so sharpe agaynste the offender, that I
 was compell|ed to moue you to bee fauourable and gentle: yea a feare, as
 though one mannes leopardye hadde belonged to all: yea a desyre
 foorthwith to amende the faulte: yea a zeale and loue to folowe sin
 banishyng dishonestie: and to bee shorte, a desyre also to reuenge, as it
 appeared, by that he, whiche dyd the faulte, was straighte punished, so that
 ye haue in all poyntes declared youre selues to bee cleare and free in that
 matter.

Wherefore▪ though I wrote vnto you all of the matter, as though it hadde
 belonged to all, I wrote not onelye for his sake, whiche dydde the faulte, or
 for hym, agaynste whome it was dooen, but rather because ye shoulde all
 perceyue what great care I haue of you, (as god is my witnes,) whiche was
 sopen|syfe, bothe leste this infeccion myghte crepe among you, and the
 faulte of one or two infecte the whole bodye, and agayne leste it shoulde
 bee vnknown, what loue ye beare towarde me, whose wyll ye so gladlye
 obeyed. And synce this was vnto you coumfortable, as whiche reioyse, that
 suche are amended, as it was meete shoulde be, gladde am I also of youre
 gladnes, but this pleasure of myne was by the gladnes of Titus encreased,
 whiche vpon my commendacion was so receyued among you, that his
 hearte was by all you refreshed, when he sawe howe ye esteem|ed me. So
 that nowe, yf I haue to hym any thyng bosted of youre ver|tue and

obedience, I haue for that taken no shame, for in this ieopardye is he, that prayseth any manne.

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Hym prayed I vnto you, and you I prayed to hym. And bothe chaunced well, for as ye in all poyntes founde Titus suche one, as I tolde you he was: euen so founde he all suche thinges true, as I before of you had bosted vnto hym, and therfore neither before hym, nor before you am I ashamed of lying. And whereas he heretofore loued you, nowe yet vpon profe of youre gentlenes, euen from the verye heart roote he loueth you, whyles he bethin|keth hymselfe and calleth to mynde, how gladlye all ye obeyed oure mynde, whiche he broughte vnto you, and also with what feare and reuerence yo rel|ceyued hym at his cummyng. And certaynlye glad am I, that I fynde you suche, as I maye in all thinges hereafter be bolde vpon you, so that hence|furthe I wyll not feare to require any thyng of you.

The .viii. Chapter.

The texte.

I certyfy you brethren, of the grace of God, which was geuen in the congregacyōs of Macedonia, how that the aboundaunce of theyr reioising is, that they are tryed with much tribulacion. And though they were exceading poore, yet haue they geuen exceading richely, and that in synglenes. For to theyr powers, (I beate them record) ye and beyond theyr power they were wyllyng of theyr owne accorde, and prayed vs with great instaūce that we would receaue theyr benefyte, and suffre them to be partakers with other in milnistryng to the sayntes. And this they d•d, not as we loked for: but gaue theyr owne sel|ues first to the Lord, and after vnto vs by the wyl of god: so that we coude not but desyre Titus, to accomplyshe thesame beneuolence among you also, euen as he had begonne.

Therfore, because ye shoulde herein also satisfie bothe my desyre, and resemble the godly deuocion of other congre|gacions, I certifie you brethren▪ howe god asisted me in the churches of Macedonia. For with ready and ioyfull myndes receyued they the gospell, and were so farre frō beeyng discouraged through the afflictions of Silas & me, whiche were with vs also in trouble, that throughe a confidence in the gospell they ioyfully endured al per|secucions. And briefly the greater tormentes we suffe|red, the more glad were they of oure deliueraunce. And whereas they are needy and exceading poore, yet suche hearty myndes had they, that the litle, whiche was lefte in theyr emptie cofers, they departed with for the reliefe of the poore. By meane wherof the poorer they became and more broughte to neede throughe theyr godly liberalitie, the rycher

are they growen in gentle heartes and singlenes. For we not onely founde them not harde in geuyng theyr goodes, but also beare true witnes with them, that thei would of good wyll not onely geue accordyng to theyr abilities, but also more than theyr abilities were, insomuche that, when we fearyng leste after suche excedding great liberalitie by reason of nede they might of that they had doen, be sorte, refused to receyue theyr free offer, they moste instantelye besoughte vs to suffer them to be partakers of this prayse, whiche is, that they geuyng some parte of theyr substaunce for the reliefe of saynctes, might agayne be partakers of theyr godlynes, in so doyng not onely satisfying my desyre, but also doing more, than I looked for, which not onely offered theyr goodes, but also

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frely gaue theselues first to god, and then to vs also, as the wil of god was, by whose inspiracion they were moued so gladly to obey vs. • hose good minde so greatly pleased me, that I exhorted Titus, that as by hys good counsell ye had already begun this liberalitie vpon good people, he would in you accom|plishe that, whiche was begun, to the intent ye shoulde be the more beholding vnto him, by whome ye haue obteyned this godly prayse of beneuolence, that in this poynt ye be behinde none other.

The texte.

Nowe therefore, as ye ate •ychein all parties, in fayth, in woorde, in knowlage, in al fer|uentues, and in loue, whiche ye haue to vs: euen so see that ye be plenteous in this bene|uolence also. This saye I, not commaunding: but because of feruentues, I doe allow the unfainednes of your loue toward other men. For ye knowe the liberalitie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that though he was tyche, yet for your sakes he became poore, y• ye through his pouertie might be made riche. And I geue counsell hereto. For this is expediente for you, whiche began, not to doe •u•ly, but also to will a yere agoe. Nowe therfore performe the thing whiche ye began to doe: that as there was in you a tedines to will, euen so ye may perfourme the dede of that whiche ye haue. For if there be first a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

But rather, as ye in other gyftes passe other, that is to wit in the gift of fayth, in the gift of tonges, in the gift of knowledge, in the gift of diligent ministring, in the gift of charitie, which ye haue declared toward vs, be ye likewise in this gift excellent, not because I require so much of you, but for this rehearse I the ready mindes of the Macedonians, that ye being through their example pro|uoked, frely declare your vnfayned charitie, in this behalfe folowing the lorde Iesus Christe asmuch as ye be able: who albeit he were ryche and lorde of al, yet because he would doe vs good, of

hys free goodnes made himselfe poore, and hydyng hys almightye power became manne, to the ende that throughe hys pouertie ye might bee enryched, makyng as it were a chaunge, wherein he receiued the pouertie of our humanitie, because he woulde make vs partakers of the riches of his Godhead. Therefore as in my other letters I required you not, to leade a synge lyfe, but for your weale and profite counsayled you there|to: so in thys matier I commaunde you not, but geue you counsell, and for this geue you counsell, because I thynke it shall be profitable for you, namely since the thyng I geue you counsell in is suche, as ye haue alreadye without my counsell not onely begunne to dooe, but also gladly of your owne myndes begunne to will it. Nowe remayneth thys, that suche thynges as ye haue begun to dooe, ye perfourme in dede, that as ye willyngly mynded this a yere paste, so ye perfourme it, as the Macedonians gaue you exauple, not aboue your habilitie, as they dyd, but euery manne as he is able. That which a manne gelueth against hys will, is not acceptable: if a mannes will bee good and ready it is sufficiente, though his gift be measured by hys habilitie: for no man is re|quired to geue that he hath not

The texte.

¶ It is not my mynde, that other be set at ease, and ye brought into cumbraūce, but that there be egalnes now at this time, and that your aboundaunce maye succour their lacke: and that theyr aboundaunce supplye your lacke, that there maye be equalitie agreeing to that whiche is written: he that had much, had not the more aboundaunce, and he that bad litle, bad neuerthesse. Thākes be vnto god which put the same good minde for you in the herte of Titus, which accepted the requeste, ye rather he was so well willing, that of his owne accorde, he came vnto you.

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Nor must men so vse theyr liberalitie, that such, vpon whome it is bestowed, liue at rest and pleasauntly, and they that geue, be brought to pouertie. But for an egalnes to be kept among you, that is to witte, that through youre riches, wherof ye haue aboūdaūce, their pouerty may be relieued: and again that their fayth & godlines, wherin they passe you, may recompence that, that perchaunce wanteth in you, whyles eche of you departeth with other, so that neyther of you lacke anye thyng, but that there bee an equalitie obserued. As we reade it chaunced with oure elders in gatheryng manna, that he whiche had gathered more, with hym remayned there no more, than with an other whiche had ga|thered lesse. For so is it written in the booke of Exodi• he that had mucche, had not the more aboundaunce, and he that had litle, had neuerthesse. These tem|porall riches haue we but for a season, to liue by them from tyme to tyme, be|cause no man should long beefore caste hys penyworthes, what

he shall haue lefte hym. For if ye goe that way to worke, no man will thinke, that he hath for himself sufficient, and spare to geue vnto other. For this present tyme this man hath nede, and thou hast to much. Of that which thou hast more than inough, geue as the presente nede requireth. If hereafter it chaunce, that thou thyselfe nede, thou shalt with like liberalitiie by some other be eased. And thanks geue I vnto god, whiche inspired this good purpose in Titus hearte, as well as in myne, which gladly accepted my request, being elswise well disposed thereto: yea, which came vnto you▪ not so much at my request, as of his own good wil, albeit he was through myne encouraging the better willed.

The texte.

We haue sente with hym the brother whose laude is in the gossell throughout all the con|gregacions: and not that onely, but is also chosen of the congregacyons to bee a felowe with vs in our iourney concernyng thys beneuolence that is minystred by vs vnto the prayse of the same lorde, and to stiere vp your prompt mynde. For thys we excheue, that any manne shoulde rebuke vs in thys plenteous distribucion that is ministred by vs (to the glory of the lorde) and make prouision for honest thinges: not onely in the sight of the lord, but also in the sight of mē.

With hym haue wee sent the brother, whose faythe and entyrenesse in prea|chyng the gossell throughout all the congregacions is well tryed, and so wel tryed, that of all the congregacyons, he was chosen out of the reste to bee as it were a felowe and companion of our iourney, to bee my helper in gatheryng money, whiche ye of your liberalytye geue to the glorie of the lorde, by whose mocy•n, thys matier is wroughte, for a playne declaracyon to all menne of your prompte myndes. Dyscrecion would, that perfite and tryed menne were put to thys busynesse, leste weake personnes conceyue a suspicion, that thys great summe of money, whiche ye of your free goodnesse geue, is not so much gathered for other as for our selues, whereas wee thereof take nothing to our selues, but the labor & trauaile to gather it and to conuay it. For wel know we that to gather money, specyally if the summe bee great, hath an apparetesus|picyon of griedines and aswel knowe we, that mennes consciences is with no|thyng sooner corrupted.

The texte.

We haue sente with them a brother of ours, whome we haue ofte times proued diligent in many thynges, but nowe muche more diligente. The great confidence whiche I haue in you,

hath caused me thys to dooe, partely for Titus sake, whiche is my felowe and helper as concerning you. Partely because of other whiche are our brethren, and the messengers of the congregacions, and the glorye of Christe. Wherefore shewe ye vnto them the prooffe of your loue, and of our boasting of you in the sighte of the congregacions▪

To these two, of whome ye haue good experience, we haue adioyned the thirde, a certain brother of ours, whome albeit ye knowe not so well, yet in diuerse thynges haue we oft tymes founde hym dilygente and faythfull, and in thys businesse more diligent, than in other, so that I nothyng doubte, but that ye will with any summe of money truste them, partely vpon consideracion of Titus, whiche is my felowe and partaker of the labors whiche I vndertake for your sakes, and partely in consideracion also of other adioyned with him, whiche besides that they be our brethren, are also chosen to dooe this businesse by the voyces of the congregacions, by whome the glorye of the gospell is so set foorth, that they may be well called not onely Apostles, but also the glory of Christe. With these shall ye in such sorte vse your selues, that ye nowe specially declare, howe greatly ye loue vs, & that I haue not without cause boasted of you vnto them. And suche gentlenes as ye shewe vnto them, ye shall shewe toward all congregacions, whose messengers they are.

¶ The .ix. Chapter.

The texte.

¶ Of the ministring to the saintes, it is but superfluous for me to write vnto you: for I knowe the redines of your mynde, whereof I boaste my selfe vnto them of Macedonia, that Achaia was prepared a yere agoe: and your ensauple hath prouoked many. Neuerthelesse, yet haue I sent these brethren, lest our boasting whiche I make of you, should be in vayne in this behalfe, that ye (as I haue sayde) may prepare your selues: leste peraduenture if they of Macedonia come with me, and fynde you vnprepared, wee (I will not say ye) shoulde be ashamed in this matter of boasting. Wherefore, I thought it necessarie to exhort the brethren, to come before hand vnto you, and to prepare your good blessing promised afore, that it might be readie, so that it be a blessing, and not a detrauding.

Howe for me to bestow any labour with my letters to moue you to be charitable vpon the poore, I thinke it superfluous, synce I haue of your readie good myndes suche sure and perfite knowledge, that I nothyng doubte to boaste thereof among the Macedonians, so farre that by your example not onely Corinthe, but welnyghe all Achaia is dysposed, ready, and well mynded to lyke liberalitie. And albeit we were well assured of youre good mynde beefore, yet thought we it not amysse to sende these

our brethren before, lest it happely appeare by some meane▪ that we haue of you made a vayne boaste in this poynte, whiche in other thynges hitherto haue done, as I sayde of you. Nowe the purpose why we sent them before, is, that as wee before wrote vnto you, the money be gathered in good tyme, and that it bee in a redinesse, whiche euery man is willyng to geue, leste if the Malcedonians, to whome I haue boasted of you, come with me and fynde you vn|prepared, we bee put to shame as one that hath made a vayne bragge of you: I will not saye, leste ye bee put to shame, as menne in thys vnlike your selues, whiche in all other giftes excell other.

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And for thys cause thoughte I it good to desyre these brethren to goe thether vnto you, beefore I came myselfe, to prepare the contribucion, whiche ye had before purposed and appoynted, that it mighte be in a more readines, wont to be called when we speake Greke, *eulogia*, that is to saye, a blessing, because eue|rye benefite shoulde gladlye and without murmuryng be both geuen and tal|ken: if it so bee not, than is it rather extorcion, than a fre gifte. He that wil geue let hym freely geue, and asmuche as he will. Thys poynte I warne you of, the more a manne geueth, the more rewarde shall he haue.

The texte

Thys yet I say: he whiche soweth litle, shall reape litle, and he that soweth plenteously shall reape plenteously. And let euery manne dooe accordyng as he hath purposed in his hearte, not grudginglye, or of necessitie. For god loueth a cherefull geuer. God is hable to make you ryche in all grace, that ye in all thynges hauyng sufficient vnto the vtmoste, may bee ryche vn|to all maner of good woorke, as it is written: He hath sparsed abroad, and hath geuen to the poore, his righteousnes remaineth for euer. He that ministreth the seede vnto the sower, ministre bread also for foode, and multiply your seede, and increase the fruites of your righteousness, that on al partes ye may be made rich into al singlenes, which causeth thorow vs that thanks are geuen vnto God. For the office of thys ministracyon, not onelye supplyeth the nede of the saintes: but also is aboundaunte herein, that for this laudable ministryng, thanks might be geuen to God of many, whiche prayse God for the obedience of your consentyng to the Gos|pell of Christ, and for your synglenes in distributing to them, and to all men, and in theyr prailers for you whiche long after you, for the aboundaunte grace of god in you. Thanks be vnto god for hys vnspeakable gifte.

Whoso soweth litle, shall reape but litle, but he that soweth plenteouslye and with a good chere, shall lykewise reape that he sowed, so that he this doe, not because we bad hym, but because he in hys hearte hath so

purposed. For more largely and freely geueth he, whiche geueth with a good will. More sparingly geueth he, whiche geueth with a heuie chere as one compelled. But god loueth a chearefull geuer. For he that dooeth hys duetie agaynste hys will, be|fore hym is coumpted, as thoughe he dyd not hys duetie. And cause is there none, why ye should feare, leste ye lose this your almes. For God which coum|teth that to bee doone vnto hym, whiche is for hys loue bestowed vpon hys saintes, is sufficiently able, albeit ye receyue no recompence of menne, to make your almes dedes gaynfully to returne vnto you, in that he wil geue you sub|stance inough for the mayntenaunce of your lyfe, and also enryche and plenti|fully encrease you in all godlye woorkes. For the almes dedes, whiche are be|stowed to relieue the poore saintes, are a good parte of iustice and godlines. El|uē as the psalme writer testifieth also: he dealed abroad and gaue to the poore, for the whiche hys iustice continueth from tyme to tyme perpetually. And my prayer is, that he which ministreth sede vnto the sower, and geueth him bread for hys nouryshmente, and substance to helpe the poore people, mayntayne alwayes your riches, eftsones to helpe them, and so multiplie your seede, and increase the frutes of your righteousnes, that ye may be ēriched in al kindes of vertues, and therewith alwayes growe forward into al synglenesse and gen|tle dysposicion of hert, and that ye dayly regard your money lesse & lesse, which while they bee bestowed, not vpon euerye rascall, but vpon the saynctes, dooe cause youre lyberalitie to auauce Goddes glorye, in that the Godlye people beeyng refreshed with youre almes, doe through vs geue thanks vnto God:

so that I herein claime some rewarde, whiche bryng this matter to passe. For in the execucion of this office, wee not onelye by youre liberalitie attayne the reliefe of poore men, but also the greater your almes is, the more geue thanks to God, whiche hauyng an experience of youre Godlinesse, for this your •oun|teousnesse, prayse God in that they dooe perceauē youre obedience to the Gos|pell with one accorde, by reason whereof ye dooe freelye and frankelye deale youre substance, not onelye to them for whome wee sue at this presente tyme, but also to all other. For the poore muste bee holpen, wheresoeuer they bee. Finallye this ensueth, that in theyr prayers, whiche as thankfull menne, they offere vnto God for you, they wishe to see you, that they maye euidentelye see before theyr face your singular godlinesse, whiche they knowe to bee geuen you by god, by the greatnesse of your almes, wherewith they are refreashed. But for this vnspeakeable gifte, speciallye thanks ought to bee geuen to God, whych both moueth your mind to geue, and prouoketh them not to abuse your giftes to idlenes or riot, but to prayse god.

¶I Paule my selfe beseche you by the meekenes and softenes of Christe whiche when I am presente among you, am of no reputacion: but am bolde towarde you, beeing absente. I beseche you that I neede not to be bolde when I am presente (with that same confidence, where with I am supposed to haue bene bolde) againste some which repute vs as though we walked carnally. For though we walke in the fles•, yet we •o not warre fleshly. For the weapens of our warrefare are not carnall thynges, but thinges mighty in God to caste downe strong holdes, wherewith wee ouerthrowe counsels and euerye hye thyng that exalteth itselfe againste the knowledge of God, and bring into captiuitie all imaginacion to the obedience of Christe, & are readye to take vengeance on all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. Loke ye on thin|ges after the vtter appearaunce?

BVt to let passe these thinges, & to come to other, I that am no meane apostle, but the verye selfesame Paule, whome ye knowe well, whiche for your sake bothe haue suffered and dooe suffer so greate troubles, doe be|seche you, for the mekenes, softenes, and mercie of Ie|sus Christ, whose exaample folowyng, I dooe humble my selfe among you, outwardelye so behauyng my self, as though I were some rascall and an outcaste, not tal|king vpō me an apostles dignitie and authoritie, which the false apostles thynke to stande in highe lookes, and yet in myne absence, (as these caytifis quarell) fraye you with roughe and cruell letters, beeyng bolde vpon youre obedience: I beseche you (I saye) so to redresse youre lyfe, that at my cummyng, I bee not compelled to execute the selfesame authoritie once al|gayne, which I seame to haue vsed agaynst certaine false apostles, which thin|kyng me to bee suche as they bee, reporte, that I carnally lyue among you, as a flatterer, while I am presente to courye fauel for feare, and beeyng absente, b• letters, boaste my selfe, as though I feared nothyng. Nothyng do I of a|ny carnall minde, but whatsoeuer I do▪ alis for your weale, and for the glory of the gospel. For though we bee clothed with this mortall fleashe, yet warre

wee not vnder the rule and gouernaunce of the fleashe, but holpen wyth the as|sistence of the spirite of god. As lowe and weake as ye thinke vs, yet are we not vnweaponed, nor without strength to suppress the aduersaries of the gospel. For the weapons of our spiritual warrefare, are not mighty by reason of yron or steele, as worldlye menne are wont to be, but mighty by the power of god, able to throwe downe all that euerseameth stronglye buylded agaynst hym. •ith these ouerthrow we

and tourne vpsyd down al crafty deuises, and euey high state of wicked people, whiche exalte and auauce themselves vpon theyr worldly wisdom agaynst the wisdom of god, which we by the gospel professe: and not only suppress, but also subdue & bryng into captiuitie al worldlye imaginacion, to make the same hencefoorth obediente vnto Christe, whome it before resisted. But and yf any manne stubbornly rebelle, readye are wee to reuenge vpon al disobedience, which power for your sakes we haue hytherto forborne, leste by vsing extremitie vpon such as are among you, and such as some of you as yet fauoure, supposyng that they bee excellent apostles, we myghte trouble your comen quietnesse, whiche I will yet hereafter vse paraduenture when I see your obedience growen to suche perfeccion, that ye canne quietly be contented, that suche shoulde bee excluded out of youre coumpanye, as ye were with the punishement of the haynous and incestuous fornicatoure. I tell you that the dignitie and power of an apostle is not a bodily power, but a spirituall. Are ye yet no wiser, but to iudge an apostle by suche thynges, as are seene, lyke as the comen people esteeme a Lorde to bee a gaye felowe by his outwarde ambitious portraiture, gyftes of fortune, and bande of men?

The texte.

Yf any manne truste in himselfe that he is Christes, let him consider this agayne of himselfe, that as he is Christes, euen so are wee Christes. For though I boast my self somewhat what more of oure authoritie (whiche the Lorde hath geuen vs to edifie and not to destroy you) it shal not bee to my shame, leste I shoulde seame as though I wente aboute to make you afrayed with letters. For the epistles (saieth he) are sore and strong, but his bodily presence is weake, and his speche rude. Let him that is suche, thinke on this wise: yea as wee are in woordes by letters when we are absente, suche are wee in deedes when we are presente.

For a tyme I nothyng speake of false apostles, but generally speakyng this I saye: yf any man thynke that he is Christes, eyther because he saw him in his mortall bodye here in earth, or because he is vnto hym of nigh aliaunce and kinred, lette hym agayne likewise remembre this wyth hymselfe, that as he is Christes so are wee Christes, and so in this beehalfe, wee are as good as he, so yea nothing hath he, wherewith to please hymselfe, and to despyse vs. It is the spirite whiche maketh vs higher to Christe, and not carnall kynred. Nothyng dooe I yet hytherto, but make my selfe equall with other apostles. But now & yf I somewhat tooke vpon me aboue them, and gloried of myne authoritie, or rather not myne but geuen vnto me of the Lorde, and geuen vnto me to doo you good, and not to hurte, I thynke it should not be to my shame, as though I had more vayne bosted of my self, than truely. But of my hyghe authoritye will I speake nothyng, lest any thinke, that I with threatening epistles would make you afrayed.

For so sayeth one, whome I for honours sake name not: Paule sendeth arro|gante and vehemente letters: But when he is presente, he is altogether vnlike hymselfe, that is to we•e, both of a weake bodye, wherein there is no maiestye, and in hys speche so rude, that it in no parte resembleth that authoritye, wher|wyth his epistles, as it were, thunder and lyghten. He that for this despiseth our authoritie, I do hym well to we•e, that as my speche is in myne epistles, when I am absence, whiche these menne saye is vehemente, suche is oure pow|er and authoritie beeyng presente, yf wee see cause, why to vse it. To bragge wyth woordes suche thynges, as I cannot in deede perfourme, is for lyghte persones, and not for me.

The texte▪

For wee cannot fynde in oure hertes to make oure selues of the noumbre of them, or to compare oure selves to them whiche prayse themselues. Neuerthesse whyle they mea|sure themselues wyth themselues, and compare themselues wyth themselues, they vnder|stande noughte. But we will not reioyce aboue measure: but accordyng to the measure of the rule, whiche God hath distributed vnto vs, a measure to reache euen vnto you. For wee stretche not oure selues beyonde measure, as thoughe wee reached not vnto you. For euen to you also haue we come wyth the Gospel of Christ, and wee boaste not oure selues oute of mea|sure in other men•es labours. Yea, and wee hope it wyll cumme to passe that when your faith is increased among you, wee shal bee magnified accordyng to oure measure more largelye, and that I shal preache the Ghospell in those regions whiche are beeyonde you: and not to boaste of those thynges, whiche by another mannes measure are prepared alreadye. But lette hym that reioyseth, reioyce in the Lorde. For he that prayseth hymselfe, is not alowed, but he whō the Lorde prayseth.

Nor canne wee fynde in oure heartes to accoumpt our selves in the noum|bre of them, or to compare oure authoritie wyth suche, as wyth deceytefull meanes, and crakyng woordes auaunce themselves, and not with deedes: whiche in the meane season forgea•e, howe they measure not themselves by theyr owne dooynges, but settefoorth themselves in comparison of menne without courage, as they themselves bee, nor by anye other waye proue theyr owne syngularnesse, but by depraunyng other mennes actes, and praysynge theyr owne. God forbydde, that wee shoulde wythoute ende glorie, as these dooe. For and yf euerye manne hadde the desyre to bee taken for so greate, as he with arrogauncye woulde make hymselfe, certaynelye there woulde bee of boastyng ney•her measure nor ende. Nor yet take wee vpon vs other mennes glorie, but accordyng vnto the measure and condicion of suche actes, as

we haue by Goddes helpe doone, esteame oure selues, as wee bee. So that as|much as he gaue vs, so much take we vpon vs, and beyonde thys, glory not we. And surelye wee haue not sklendrellye enlarged the dominion of oure capi|tayne, as whiche came euen as farre as to you, not of myne owne head onely, but sente by God. A sufficient matter to glorye of haue wee, in that we came not vnto you after the comen sorte, but after suche a sorte, that by vs the gospell of Christe was preached vnto you, so that wee neede not with hyghe woordes to prayse oure selves, as thoughe wee in deede reached not vnto you, whyche els wyse were not verye easye to bee wo••e. Nor came wee vnto you beyng alreadye brought into beliefe, as false apostles vse to do, but fyrst of al other perswaded you in it.

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Nor boaste wee oure selves aboue measure of other mennes labours, takynge vpon vs the prayse of other mennes actes, as cowardly capitaines dooe which chalenge the prayses of winnyng a holde whiche another manne gote. But rather wee truste, that as your fayth daylye encreaseth and groweth more and more, wee shall also through you geate more praise, accordyng vnto the marke appoynted vnto vs by God, and preache also the gospell of Christe in coun|treys beyonde you, and so auauance hys banners further then wee haue hy|therto doone, not dooyng these actes throughe anothers guidyng, as an vn|der souldier, nor enteryng vpon that, which is already gotten, and so malapert|ly taking vpon vs y• praise of other mennes labours, but at this point are wee rather, not onely not to boaste our selves of other mennes actes, but also not to take vpon me the glorye of myne owne, knowyng that whosoeuer doth reioyce, muste reioyce in Christes name, whose businesse he doeth. Nor is he commended of god, whiche bloweth abroad hys own prayses, but he that is chosen of God as a meete persone, and faythefullye doothe the office cō|mitted vnto hym, is the onely one, whome the Lorde approueth and prayseth.

The .xi. Chapter.

The texte.

Woulde to God, ye could haue suffered me a litle in my folishnesse: yea ye dooe also for|beare me. For I am gelous ouer you, with godly gelouslye. For I haue coupled you to o•• manne, to make you a chaste virgin to Christe.

NOr can I yet refrayne, but that I muste somewhat gloriouslye sette foorth my selfe, notwithstanding I knowe, that it is taken for a pointe of folishnes, yf a manne prayse hy•selfe, but would to god ye woulde a litle

while suffre me to playe the foole, yea I doubt not, but ye wil beare with me. For to this folishenesse am I dryuen, neither of an arrogant mynde, nor yet for anye desyre of auauntage, but of a vehemente and a feruente loue I beare towarde you, and as I mighte call it, a ialousye. For certainlye I amalous ouer you, for euerye thyng afrayed for you, as whome I tenderlye loue: Nor loue I you after a worldelye sorte, but godlye: nor am for my selfe ialouse, but in Christes beehalfe. For to hym, as youre onelye spouse haue I spirituallye married you as a chaste and vndefiled virgin, from whome ye may neuer bene deuided. I take nothing of yours as myne, Christe is your spouse, I was but the mariage maker

The texte.

¶ But I feare, leste it cumme to passe that as the serpente beeguyled Eue through hys subtiltie, euen so youre wyttes shoulde bee corrupte from the singlenesse that ye hadde towarde Christe. For if he that cummeth preache an other Iesus, then hym whome we preached: or if ye receyue an other spirite, then that whiche ye haue receyued, eyther an other Gospell, then that ye haue receyued, ye myghte ryghte well haue beene contente. For I suppose, that I was not behynde the chiefe Apostles. But though I bee rude in speakynge, yet I am not so in knoweledge. Howebeit I monge you wee haue bene knowen to the vtmoste what we are in all thynges. Dydde I therein synne, because I submytted my selfe, that ye myghte bee exalted: and because I preached to you the Gospell of God free? I robbed other congregacions, and tooke wages of them to dooe you seruice. And when I was presente with you and had nede, I was chargeable to no manne: for that whiche was lackyng vnto me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied, and in all thynges, I kepte my selfe so, that I shoulde not bee chargeable to any manne, and so will I kepe my selfe.

I delyuered you vnto hym a pure and a chaste virgin: but as the craftie serpent once beguiled the symple mynde of Eue, corrupting the purenes wherein she was made, so feare I leste throughe the subtiltie of false Apostles, youre simple wittes bee corrupted, and chaunge you from that purenesse, whiche ye haue hitherto vsed towarde Iesus Christe youre husbände, whome in all poyntes pure, ye purelye receiued of vs. If it so were, that this newe Apostle, whiche hathe entered vpon my labours, taughte you an other Iesus, than the same whiche we preached vnto you: or if by hym ye receyued an other spirite, whiche ye receyued not by vs: or if he taughte you a ghospell, whiche we taughte you not: then mighte ye lawefullye suffer hym braggyng and auauncynge hymselfe aboue vs, as one whiche hadde geuen you, that coulde not be geuen by vs. Nowe if ye of them receyue nothing, but that whiche we plentifullye gaue you, what shoulde the matter meane, that ye in maner dysdayne vs, and beare with

theyr arrogante hautenes? Bee it that they bee hyghe Apostles, yet touchyng the encrease of the ghospell, surelye I thynke my selfe in no poynte behynde anye of the chiefe apostles. Bee it, that they bee more eloquente than I am, yet in knowledge will I geue them no place.

There is no nede of a paynted tale, when the thyng selfe is presente. Lette them neuer so muche with theyr blasynge woordes boaste themselues, we haue with veraye deedes shewed towardes you oure myndes, and power apostolique, so that ye coulde in vs fynde no lacke, excepte peraduenture this displease you, for the whiche ye shoulde moste commende oure good myndes, because we haue not with disdaynefulnesse beene painefull vnto you, as they bee, but among you humbled and submitted my selfe, not to deceiue you thereby, but throughe myne humblenes to exaulte you in the faithe: or this, because I was not costlye vnto you, but freelye and at mine owne finding preached vnto you the ghospell of God, so farre forth

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sparing you, that not withstandyng I was in great pouertye, yet rather had I robbe other congregacions, because I would without any charge of yours dooe you seruice not so muche as at that time chargeable to any manne, when I was among you though I than were in great nede. For than was I in my pouertie relieued by such as came from Macedonia. So that not only in this thing, but also in all other, I haue and will lykewise hereafter so warely kepe my selfe, that I to no man bee chargeable.

The texte.

¶ If the trueth of Christe bee in me, thys reioysyng shal not bee taken from me in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I loue you not? God knoweth. Neuertheless what I dooe, that will I dooe, to cut away occasyon from them, whiche desyre occalsyon that they myghte bee founde lyke vnto vs in that wherein they reioyce. For suche false Apostles are disceateful woorkers, and fashion themselues lyke vnto the Apostles of Christ. And no marueil: for Satan hymselfe is chaunged into the fasshyon of an aungell of lyghte. Therefore it is no great thing though hys ministers fashion themselues as though they were the ministers of righteousnesse, whose ende shalbe according to theyr dedes.

Nor speake I this arrogantly, but so alway fauour and aide me the trueth of Christe, as not onely at Corinthe, but also in the whole countrey of Achaia thys glorye of myne in preachyng of the gospell freely, shall not be taken from me. And why doe I this? Despyse I your liberalitie for anye hatred borne toward you? God knoweth, that thys is not the cause, but that whiche I dooe, and mynde to dooe hereafter, is to cut away all

occasyon from suche, as in vs seeke to fynde faulte: that where as these menne are ryche, pretending openly that they refuse rewardes, and yet receyue them secretlye, that not so muche as in this poynte, wherein they seeke for a false prayse, they be founde better than wee, whiche not so muche as in our pouertie receiue oughte of anye man, not sufferyng that they shoulde passe vs, no not in thys vayne and counterfaycte kynde of godlinesse. For these in dede preache the gospell, not of good will, but for theyr owne lucre and auauncement, and whereas they are neither sente by Christ nor dooe Christes seruice, yet take they falsely vpon them the honor of an Apostles name, and make as though they were hyred into the vineyarde of the lorde, and that they are hys woorkemen, when they hynder hys businesse, and vnder the pretence of the Gospell seeke theyr belly fare, enterlasyng theyr owne doctrine, muche like them, whiche intending to deceiue, mingle with the pureste wine that can be had, deadly poysons, takyng vpon them in the meane season an apostles persone, that vnder the colour of that autoritie, and shadow of that hygh name, they may the rather deceiue simple people, more lyke to enlterlude players, then to Apostles. And surely it is the moste deuelyshe kinde of deceite, vnder the colour of religion to sowe the venemous poyson of vngodli|nes. They say that Christe is theyr maister, when in dede they dooe the deuill seruice. Nor maruaile is it any, if the scholers resemble theyr maisters. For e|uen the darke deuill satan hymselfe with no other craftie meane more hurteth menne, than whan he by dyssemblyng what he is, by enchauntemente turneth hymselfe into the lykenesse of a bryghte aungell. But suche as are the vnfayned dysciples of Christe vse no deceite, thereyn resemblyng theyr maister.

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And it is no new thyng, that the minysters of the deuyl take vpon them a con|trary persone, that whereas they serue vuryghteousnesse, they may yet seeme the minysters of ryghteousnesse, whiche beeyng moste false traytours, preten|dyng frendshyp are extreme enemies. I vse not yet myne autoritie vpon them, but for a quyettesse leaue them to theyr malyce. But they shall not escape pulnyschement, for all euill woorkes shall haue an euil ende.

The texte.

¶ I say agayne, leste any manne thynke that I am foolyshe: or els euen nowe take ye me as a foole, that I also maye boast my selfe a litle: That I speake, I speake it not a●●● the ●orde, but as it were folyshelye, in thys matter of bostyng. Seing that ma|ny ●●●oy●e after the ●●eshe, I wyll ●e●oyce also. For ye suffre fooles gladlye, seing ye your selues are wyse. For ye suffre if a manne brynge you into boudage: if a manne deuoure: if a manne take: if a

manne exalte hym selfe: if a manne smite you on the face. I speake as concerning rebuke, as though we had bene weake in this behalfe.

And nowe muste I agayne desyre you to beare with me, that I may sum|what truely boaste of my actes, leste some thynke it foolishenes for me to praise my selfe. Yf I can not obtain this much of you, yet beare this muche with my foolyshenesse, if ye can, that synce these marcha•ntes among you so much crake of themselues, that I may also somewhat glorye of my selfe. For that, whiche I am nowe about to say, shall not sauere of that pure spirite of Christe, but rather worldly foolyshenes: for glorye will I of suche thynges, whiche nothing the more brynge vs into Goddes fauoure, but are suche whereof the foolyshe commensorte is woonte to bragge and crake, whereas in them, true glorye resteth not. I knowe that it is lyke foolyshenesse, that I dooe, but these false preachers crakes cōpel me to it, whom yet ye fondly suffer to glory. Since ther|fore there be among you so manye, whiche woulde be coumpted for apostles, and yet boaste of no suche thynges, as make to an apostles dignitie, I wil also sumwhat of my selfe glory, in this folowing theyr foolyshenes, whiche oure foolyshenes ye shal in the meane season take in good woorte: for wyse menne, as ye are, gladly beare with other mennes foolyshenesse. And good reason is it that amonge so manye as continually glorye, ye for a while suffer me, synce my reioysynge shall not vnto you be paynefull as theyrs is. In them ye suf|fer willyngly to bee broughte into bondage, whereas Christe woulde haue you free: or if anye of them with costes deuoure and weare you oute whereas we frely taught you: in them ye suffer, if any by receiuing presentes and giftes diminishe your substaunce, if any throughe pryde vse tyrannye vpon you, yea and that whiche is a poynte of extreame vilannye, smyte you in the face with hys hande, or if they thys dooe not, yet they so handle you some other way, that the vila•••• is no lesse. These for theyr thys dooyng, ye thynke hygh apostles, hauyng them in pryce for suche thynges, for whiche it is commenly coumpted foolyshenes for any manne to auaunte hymselfe. As though we coulde not ab|use the same tytles with power and autoritie to kepe you vnder, had we not rather hadde a greater respecte to youre wealthe than to our dominion.

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The texte.

Howbeit wherein soeuer any man dare be bolde (I speake foolishly) I dare be bolde also. They are Hchrues, euen so am I▪ They are Israelites, euen so am I. They are the sede of Abrahā, euen so am I. They are the ministers of Christ (I speake as a foole) I am more. In labore more aboūdaunt: In st••p•s aboute measure: In prieson more plent•ous•y: In death out. Of y•lewes ••ue

t•mes receiued I euery ••ne fortie stripes saue one. Thrise was I beaten
 with •oddes. I was once stoned. I suffered thrise •••pwracke. Nyghte and
 day haue I bene in the d•pes•a. In •ourneing often: •• parels of
 waters: •• parels of robbers: In ••opardies o•••ne o•ne ne••o•:
 in •eoperdies among the Heathen: in parels in the ••t•e: in parels in
 wy•dernes: in parels in the •ea: in parels •mong false brethren: in labor and
 trauail: in watching o•ten: in hunger: in thi•ste: in fast•nges often: in could
 and in nakednes: besyde the thynges which ou••ardly happen vnto me.
 I ••••• bred dayly and doe •ar• for al congregacions. •ho is weake, & I am
 not weake? Who is offended, and I burne not? If I •ust nedes boaste, I will
 boaste o• the thinges that concerne myne infirmities.

And (for a while to speake lyke a foole) what crake they of, or what is it
 that maketh them so much to stand in their own conceites, wherein I can
 not match thē? They would haue it seme a great mater to bee an Hebrue,
 as though god much regarded of what sto•ke a man cūmeth, and yet if it
 bee any thing wurth to bee an Hebrue borne, I am an Hebrue also. They
 are Israelites, so am I: they are of the sede of Abraham, euen so am I. For
 with such vain tytles brag they themselues, in which yet if we lusted to
 glory, we are as good as they, & in such poyntes, whiche verely make
 toward the glorye of an apostle, we passe them. They are the ministers of
 Christ, let it be so, but (to speake thys foolishly but yet truely) more am I.
 That I so am, I declared neither wth high looke, nor with takyng of
 presentes, nor by braggyng of my kyndred, but by suche meanes, as
 •uidētly proued mine apostolique spirite. I haue takē more paines than
 any of them, more stry•es haue I suffered, more oft times emprisoned, in
 •eop•rdie of death more often And if ye lust to heare a particular
 rehearsall, of the Iewes fyue tymes receyued I euery time fortye stripes
 saue one: thryse was I beaten with •argeauntes rodde, once was I
 stoned, thrise suffered I shipwracke, night and day haue I bene in the
 deape sea, not without extreme desperacyon of my lyfe. What nede I of
 these to make a syngulare rehearsall? synce I for the gospels sake haue
 of•times bene in ieoperdie, not onely by sea, but also by lande:
 oftentimes in ieoperdies of waters, in peryll of robbers, in perill by
 reason of per•ecucion of the Iewes, in •eoperdies among the violent
 Heathen, in perill in the ci••s, in peril in wildernes, in peril in the sea,
 when we were lyke to haue bene slayne of the mariners: in ieoperdie of
 suche, which vn|der the false name of christian men resisted our gospel.
 Now wil I let passe my continual labours and trauayls taken for the
 Gospels sake, and not rehear•e my continual and often watchinges, my
 hūger and thrust suffered often times, my often fastynges, nor the payne
 of coldenesse and nakednes. But the paines, which I haue hitherto
 rehersed, appertain onely to bodely affliccion, which in the meane season
 was lykewyse in no lesse trouble and carefulnesse of mynde, which I take
 for suche a multitude of congregacions, which I so hartely ten|der, that
 whatsoeuer chaunceth vnto them, I thinke it to chaūce vnto my self. For
 whose miseries am I not as sory as for myne owne? Who is weake and

diseased, with whose weakenes, I am not also g^oieued my selfe? Who is offē|ded, with whose displeasures I am not in mind offēded? Yf I must nedes bost, rather wil I bost of such thinges, which shew mine infirmitie, than of such, as shew my greatnes. Let other bost, how for y^ogospels sake they are much made of that they grow riche, that vnder Christes tytle they beare great rule, more ^oūly thinke ^o it to boast, y^o I for Christes sake haue suffered vilany & affliction.

The texte.

The God and farher of ou^o Lorde Iesus Christe, whiche is blessed for euermore, kneweth that I lye not. In the ^one of Damasco, the gou^onou^oe of the people vnder

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kyng ^oretas, layde watche in the citie of the Damascens, and woulde haue caughte me, and at a wynd^owe was I let downe in a basket thorowe the wall, and so scaped I his handes.

God and the father of our Lorde Iesus Christe knoweth, that I lye no|thyng. When I was at Damasco, he, whome kyng Areta father in lawe to Herode hadde made ruler ouer that countreye, had layed watche in the citie of Damasco, labouryng by all the meanes he coulde to take me, to do the Iewes a pleasure, and woulde haue kylled me, as the auctour of sedicion: what shoulde I do? Learned had I of the Lorde, sometyme in cruell perse|cucion to flye. My mynde gaue me, that the tyme was not yet comen to suf|fer martyrdome, but rather that the tyme required to preache the gospell a|brode: but the tyranne had rounde about besette me, so that refuge was there none, but that in a basket throughe a wyndowe from the wall, I was with a rope lette downe, and thus escaped I the rulers handes.

The .xii. Chapter.

The texte.

Doubtlesse, it is not expedient for me to boast: I wyll come to visions and reuelac|ions of the Lorde. I knowe a man in Christ, aboue fourtene yeares a goe (whether he were in the bodye I cannot tell, or whether he were out of the body I cannot tell, God know|eth) howe that he was taken vp into the thyrde heauen. And I know thesame man (whe|ther in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) howe that he was taken vp into Pa^oadyse, and heard secrete wordes whiche no ma^o can vtter. Of this man will I boast, but of my selfe wyll I ^oor boast, e^ocepte it be of myne infirmities. For thoughe I would b^oa^o, I ^o al not be a fole. for I would saye the truth.

Neuerthelesse, I spare you: leste any man shoulde thynke of me, aboue that whiche he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And leste I shoulde be exalted out of measure thorowe the excellencye of the reuelacions: there was geuen vnto me vnquietnesse thorow the fleshe, euen the messenger of Salta to buffer me▪ because I shoulde not be exalted ou▪ of measure: For this thyng besought I the Lorde thryse, that it might departe from me. And he sayed vnto me: my grace is sufficient for the. For my strength is made perfect thorowe weakenesse, Very gladly therfore wyll ▪•ioyce of my weakenes, that the strength of Christ may• dwell in me.

T His farre foorth haue we rehearsed suche thinges, as delclare cure troubles and miseries, and such• ma•iers, as in mennes iudgementes bring vs rather in contempte, than in any renoume. But nowe whether I should also rehearse other thinges or not, I haue not fully determinēd, of whiche yet some falsly boaste thēselues. Shoulde I glorie or not? Yea sometyme expediente is it to glorie, namely since the brifte of myne epistle hath brought me to the visions and reuelacions of the Lorde Iesus, of whiche sorte synce false apostles fayne manye, and wantonlye boaste them, euen agaynste my wyll, as one compelled, (leste in this I seeme behynde thē) I wyll reh•arse but onelye one, and that not to my glorie neither, but to the glorie of god. I knowe a certayne manne, whiche aboue. xiiii. yeares a goe was taken vp, whether it were in the bodye, or without the bodye I cannot tell, god knoweth, whiche yet was taken vp into the thyrde heauen, and •hence agayne taken vp into paradise, and in bothe places hearde secrete woordes, whiche no manne can vtter.

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For this mannes sake, to whome through gods fre goodnes such blisfulnes befell, glory will I, but of my selfe boast wil I not, sauing in the rehearsing of such thinges as declare my weakenes and infirmitie. And yet if I in this matier also minded sumwhat to speake of my selfe, since I should neither lie nor of my selfe speake vaingloriously, though I haue acknowledged folishnes, yet could I not iustly be condemned thereof: but yet for your sakes, and not for myne owne abstayne I from rehearsing of them, leste some thinke more in me, thā there is, and suppose that I am some greater one, thā either myne actes, or my preaching pretende. And peradventure it is not without ieopardie neither, to glorye of suche thinges as make vs great, and thereby nigh vnto the ieopardie of arrogancie. For this cause leste I myghte bee to proude by reason of high reuelacions, or els among men be taken for greater than it is expedient I shoulde: I haue by the sufferance of the moste* merciful god, gyuen vnto me vnquietnes and affliction of bodye, bothe to put me in remembrance of my condicion, and also to teache all men, that I am a mortall manne,

vnder lyke miseries, as other been. There is geuen (I saye) to truble me, whiche do Christes seruice, the messenger and mini|ster of Satan, to resiste my gospell, and with mooste cruell persecucions to vexe me, as one that on the heade gyueth me buffettes, keapyng vn|der and suppressyng me, leste I mighte to muche bee exalted. And be|cause this punishement exceadynglye disquieted me, thryse besoughte I the Lorde, that he woulde from this affliction delyuer me, but he seeyng, what was better for me, than I coulde my selfe, he aunswered me after this sorte: Paule bee contente with my goodnes towards thee, and de|syre nomore. As for thyne afflictions appertayne bothe to the magnilfying of my glorye, as who throughe my ayde canste not bee ouercommen, bee the stormes neuer so greate, and also to thy saluacion, whiche by bo|dilye afflictions, arte in spirituall treasures of the soule dayelye more and more enriched.

And so dooeth mannes weakenes make perfite the power of God,^{*} and infirmitie accomplyshe strengthe. For when by preachyng of vile and weake personnes the gospell not onelye holdeth on, but also flouris|shethe agaynste the deuyll and the worlde, vsyng agaynste it all kyndes of cruelnesse, it maketh a playne profe that this geare is not, by anye worldelye power broughte aboute, but by the power of God. Nowe then the more afflictions we suffer, the more is Goddes glorye sette foorth, whiche by vs woorketh and sheweth his power. Synce than I was thus aunswered of God, hencefoorth wyll I of nothyng more gladlye reioyce, than of my afflictions, whereby I seeme rather feble, than greate, in whiche also if there appeare anye greatenesse or heygthe, all is to the glorye of god: that where for Christes sake I seeme feble, by hym I maye seeme strong and mightie.

The texte.

Therefore, haue I delectacion in infirmities, in rebukes, in reade, in persecucyons, & in anguyshe for Christes sake. For when I am weake, then am I strong. I am becōe a fole

in boasting my selfe, ye haue compelled me: For I ought to haue been cōmmended of you. For in nothing was I inferiour vnto the chiefe Apostles: though I be nothing, yet the tol|kens of an Apostle were wrought among you with all pacience, & sygnes and wonders, and myghtie dedes. For what is it, wherein ye were inferiours vnto other congregaciōs? Excepte it be herein, that I was not chargeable vnto you. Forgeue me this wrong. Be|holde, now the thirde tyme I am ready to come vnto you: and yet wyll I not be charge|able vnto you. For I seke not yours, but you. For the chyl|dren ought not to lay vp for the fathers and mothers, but the fathers and mothers for the chyl|dren.

And therefore I specially reioyce and triumphe in myne afflictions, in my reproches, in my pouertie and persecution, and in my distreasses suffered for Christes sake. For when I am in suffering them most forsakē, and despayre in myne owne strength, than am I through Christes healpe verely stronge and myghty. But whither am I driuen through the vehemencie of this mine oration? Me thinketh I am nowe with boasting fallen to playne folishnes, but ye are the occasion, who compelled me therto. For synce all that euer I was able to do, was geuen me for your weale, it besemed you to haue spoken that thing to my commendacion, whiche I nowe vnsemely am compelled to reporte of my selfe. I seke not for the prayse of that thing, which I neuer dyd, but if I haue done asmuche as any other, why are other more made of then I? I am but a poore man,* of a lowe degree, troubled and beaten vnder fote, not eloquent: I neither refuse nor improue anye of these, these thynges are myne, yf there be any incommodytie in them. Yet as vile as I am, touching you, ye founde me in no poynt behynde other Apostles, I wyll not saye, of the meane sorte onely, but not somuch as behynde the hyghest. I boaste not of that in my selfe, whiche ye haue not founde in me, for I haue playnly proued, that I am a very Apostle, and therof make I your selves iudges. The fyrst and chiefe argument and profe of an Apostle is, for the gospelles sake gladly to suffer all troubles, in which poynte I haue certaynly shewed my selfe to be an Apostle. Neyther lacked we such gyftes, wherwith God for the vnbeleuers sake bringeth my preaching in credence, as signes, miracles, and myghtye dedes. Yf I saye not truth, tell me wherin ye are behynde other congregacions, or what gaue any of these greate Apostles to any congregacion, whiche we gaue you not? Excepte thys onely be a lacke, that I was not costly vnto you, as other Apostles were, ye cā in me finde no lacke: in which point yf I haue offended you, forgyue me this displeasure, euen because I haue not offended you, though in dede I repent me not of my so doyng. Nowe haue I twyes already been among you, and was chargeable to no man, & loe, nowe purpose I the thyrde tyme to see you, nor yet mynde I more to be chargeable vnto you nowe, than I haue ben before. And though I shewe yet none earnest cause for it, yet is it not* without a cause, but for what cause soeuer I doe it, al is for your weale, and in this matier I vse my selfe as a true father. For the children ought not to laye vp for theyr fathers and mothers, but contrary the fathers & mothers, for theyr chyldren. Fathers loue is such a thing, that they are not content to bestow only the goodes, whiche they with great labours haue gotten, for the weale of theyr children, but also theyr lyues.

I will very gladly bestowe, and wilbe bestowed for your soules: though the more I loue you, the lesse I am loued agayn. But be it that I was not chargeable vnto you: neuerthelesse whan I was craftie, I tooke you with gyle. Did I pyll you by any of them, whome I sent vnto you? I desyred Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Dyd Titus defraude you of any thing? walked we not in one spyryte? Walked we not in like steppes? Agayne, thinke ye, that we excuse our selues vnto you? We speake in Christe in the sight of God. But we doe all thynges (dearly beloued) for your edifying. For I feare, leste it come to passe, that when I come▪ I shall not fynde you suche as I woulde, and that I shall be founde vnto you suche as ye would not. I feare, leste there be founde among you debate, enuying, wrathe, stryfe, backbytinges, whysperynges, swellynges and discorde. I feare, leste when I come agayne, God bryng me lowe among you, and I be constrayned to be|wayle many of them whiche haue synned all readie and haue not repented of the v•c•ea|nesse, fornicacion, and wantonnesse, whiche they haue commytted.

And therfore so farre am I from exacting any thyng of you, that I not only am ready with all my harte to bestowe, that I haue vpon you, but also my selfe, if it be expedient for your soule helth. Sufficient is it for me, that I as a father this doe for my chyl dren, albeit I am not ignorant, that it is with me towards you, as it is with many fathers with theyr chyl dren: that wheras I tenderly loue you, I am not lykewyse loued alayne, but lesse regarded than they, whiche would you not so well as I. Put the case, that I was not my selfe chargeable vnto you fearing enluye, but yet that through craftie conueyaunce, I beguyled you, workyng that by some hiered therunto, which I was ashamed to doe my selfe. For paradventure some wil make this cauilacion, thinking me to be such as o|ther bee. Tell me I pray you, exacted I any thing of you by any of thē, whiche came vnto you in my name? I desyred Titus to goe vnto you, to * hym adioyned I as a companion, the brother, whiche is well tryed and knowen of all the congregacions. Exacted Titus any thyng of you? Had we not both one mynde? Walked not we both lyke steppes? For I refuse not to haue that layed to my charge, whiche was done by suche as I sent vnto you. But no we thinke ye agayne, that whyles we this speake, we pleade our owne matter? no not so, but whatsoeuer we speake, whether it be in humbling of our selfe, or exalting, laying your vnkyndnes to your charge, al is done for your weale, dearly beloued brethren, as God is my witnesse whiche knoweth my conscience, and as Christ also is my witnesse whose cause I haue in hande. I assay all wayes, I leaue no meane vnsear|ched, I shape my selfe into al fashions, & all to bryng you to better frame. I nothyng feare these counterfayte Apostles for my owne sake, but this feare I, leste whē I come, vnto you, I fynde you not such, as I would ye were, & ye agayne fynde me such, as ye would not. My desyre is to see you in al poyntes faulteles, that ye may agayne see me mylde and wel pleased. But if ye continew to geue eare to some, I feare, leste I shall fynde among you

debate, enuying, wrathe, strife, backbytynges, whisperinges, swelllinges, & discorde, so that yf I come agayne, I feare leste it chaunce, that whom it semed to be seen of you mery and pleasaunt, as one sufficiently troubled with your outrageousnes already, the Lorde among you bring me lowe agayne, so that in steade of a tryumphe I be compelled to morne in all theyr behelfes, whiche haue already synned, and not repented as yet their vncleanes, fornicacion and wantonnes, which they haue committed.

¶ The .xiii. Chapter.

The texte.

Nowe come I the thyrd tyme vnto you: in the mouth of two or thre witnesses shall euery woorde be stablyshed. I tolde you before, and tell you before: and as I sayed when I was present with you the seconde tyme, so wryte I nowe beyng absent, to them whiche in tyme past haue synned, and to all other: that yf I come agayne, I wyll not spare, seyng that ye seke experience of Christ whiche speaketh in me, which amonge you is not weake, but is myghtie in you. For though he was crucifyed in weaknes, yet lyueth he throwe the power of God. And we no dout are weake in him: but we shal liue with him: by the myght of God amonge you.

THis shalbe my thyrd cummyng vnto you, againste which let euery of you be in a readines. For I wil no lōger wynke at matters, but minde in them to procede straitly, and as the extreme rigoure of the lawe will. Whosoeuer shall be accused, shall by the wytnes of two or thre either be quited or condemned. Once haue I already warned you, and agayne nowe warne you, and as I sayed, when I was present with you the selconde tyme, so wryte I vnto you nowe beyng absent, not only to them, whiche euen at that tyme hadde offended, but also to all such, as are offenders, yf I fynde them vnamended, forasmuch as I haue nowe twyse geuen you warnyng, I will no more spare you, as I haue hertofore done. For what meane you? Seke ye to your owne displeasure to haue experience, whether suche thynges as I speake, I speake of my selfe, or by the spirite of Christe, which by me speaketh vnto you? What, despise ye hym also, as weake? He towarde you was not weake, though he once were suche vnto the Iewes and Pilate, but rather among you he declared himselfe mighty, by whose name ye sawe the dead to liue againe, deuils to flee, and the sycke to be made whole. For albeit he once touching the weakenes of nature, whiche he had taken vpon hym, would he fastened vpon a crosse, yet must he not therfore be coumpted as weake. He dyed by reasō of the infirmitie of his body, but he lyueth through the power of God the father. Lykewise we Apostles, though folowyng the steppes of Christ our maister,

to vnbeleuers seme feble, whyles we are of them bea|ten, emprisoned, and reuiled, yet through the power of God, mightie shal we be by hym againste you, yf you with stoubernes prouoke my pacience.

The texte▪

Proue your selves: whether ye are in the fayth or not. Examen your owne selues: knowe ye not your owne selues howe that Iesus Christe is in you, excepte ye be cast awayes? I trust ye shall knowe, that we are not cast awayes. I desyre before God that ye doe none eluyll, not that we should seme commendable, but that ye should doe that whiche is honest▪ and let vs be counted as castawayes: We can doe nothyng against the trueth, but for the trueth. We are glad when we are weake and ye strong. This also we wishe for, euen your perfectnesse. Therefore wryte I these thynges beyng absente, leste when I am presente, I should vse sharpenes, according to the power, whiche the Lorde hath geuen me, to edifie, and not to destroy. Finally brethren, fare ye well: be perfecte, be of good comforte, be of one mynde, lyue in peace, and the God of loue and peace▪ shalbe with you. Gr••• on: ano|ther in an holy kysse. All the sayntes salute you. The grace of our Lord Iesus Christe, and the loue of God, and the felowshyp of the holy ghoste be with you all. Amen.

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Seke not to haue a profe of vs, but rather proue your selves, whether ye continew in the gyft of fayth, or els be fallen from it. Searche and ex|amine one an other of you. Ye had playne experience by your working of miracles, and by sondrye other gyftes howe that not so muche as in you was Christ weake. Yf that power be gone from you, it is a plaine profe, that eyther your fayth is waxen faynte, or that Christe beyng displeased with your euylly lyfe hathe altered his good mynde to warde you. Ye knowe not your selves, and wyll ye haue experience of me, when youre selves knowe not, whether Christe bee in you, or not? For he is in you, yf the strength of faythe bee in you, onlesse peraduenture your faythe beeyng after a sorte safe, ye haue through vncleane lyuyng deserued to bee reiected of Christe. But howesoeuer the matter goe with you, I truste ye shall in vs euidently perceyue, that we are not forsaken. My faythe is whole, and thereby shall Christe in me bee able to punyshe al suche, as wyll not with a good will come to amendmente. But what sayd I, (I truste?) yea rather contrarie muche more wyshe we and desyer God that through your faultes I be not compelled to shewe my power, not because we feare, leste we be founde weake, if we goe a|bout to shewe thesame, as some vaynly talke of me: this rather is my delsyer, that we be coumpted as castawayes, so that ye be vpright and ho|neste. For yf ye contynewe in fayth and godly lyfe, cause haue I none, whye to vse my power agaynste

you. Nor refuse I after thys sorte to * seme weake, and for thys to bee reakened to haue no power, because ye gaue me none occasion to exercise it. For agaynste the truth we can do no|thyng, but whatsoeuer we can doe, all is for the truth: in somuche that we agaynste innocentes haue no power, but agaynste offenders are we of power. Yf there be in you nothing founde worthy of correccion, ye shall as it were vnarme vs, with innocencie declaryng your selves mightie, by reason that ye shal fro me as a weake one take away the power geuen vnto me to punishe with all. The slaundersers of my name will saye I can doe nothing, affirmyng that I coulde not for some lacke in me, doe that thing, whiche by reason of your integritie I coulde not doe. But gladde am I, as often as after this sorte ye be stronge, though we be iudged weake, yea we be not only gladde, yf this so be, but also moste heartely wyshe, that I seme to lacke somewhat, so that ye be perfecte. And for this cause thought I it good more earnestly to warne you by letters, leste when I come, I myght be compelled to vse rigoure. Muche more wyshe I to haue you amended with threatnyng woordes, than to vse my power in punyshyng you, geuen vnto me of the Lord for your weale, and not to hurte you. Against innocentes I canne doe nothyng, but it maketh muche matter, that suche as with haynouse vices corrupte your con|gregacion, scape not alwaye vnpunished. I haue nowe in aduertising you done my parte, it remayneth, that ye doe yours. Diligently apply your selfe vnfaynedly to reioyce, all occasions of sorowe sette a parte, encrea|sing styll from better to better, vntyll that ye become perfecte, amending suche thynges, as hurte your innocencie, that when your faultes are sufficiently corrected, ye may of your amendemente take comforte. Agre to|gether, and striue not eche one with other of you through sondrye opini|ons,

lette there bee among you peace and mutuall loue. Yf ye so do, then wil the god of loue and auctour of peace, alwayes fauour you and with you bee contented. Greete eche one another of you in a holy kysse, not after the com|mon sorte, but euen with your heartes, All the sayntes, whiche are here, grete you. The fauour of oure Lord Iesus Christ, and the loue of god the father, and the felowshyp of the holy ghost bee among you al: that acknowlegyng the benefite of the sonne, the charitie of the father towarde you, whiche in suche sorte loued you, that he gaue you his onely sonne to bee your redemer, and the goodnes of the holye ghost, by whome he alwaye geueth vs his gif|tes, ye maye after the exa|mp|le of the vndeuided trinite, lyue in a lyke vnitie, that is to witte in concord, bothe pure, & perfite.

¶ Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon the latter Epistle of S. Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians.